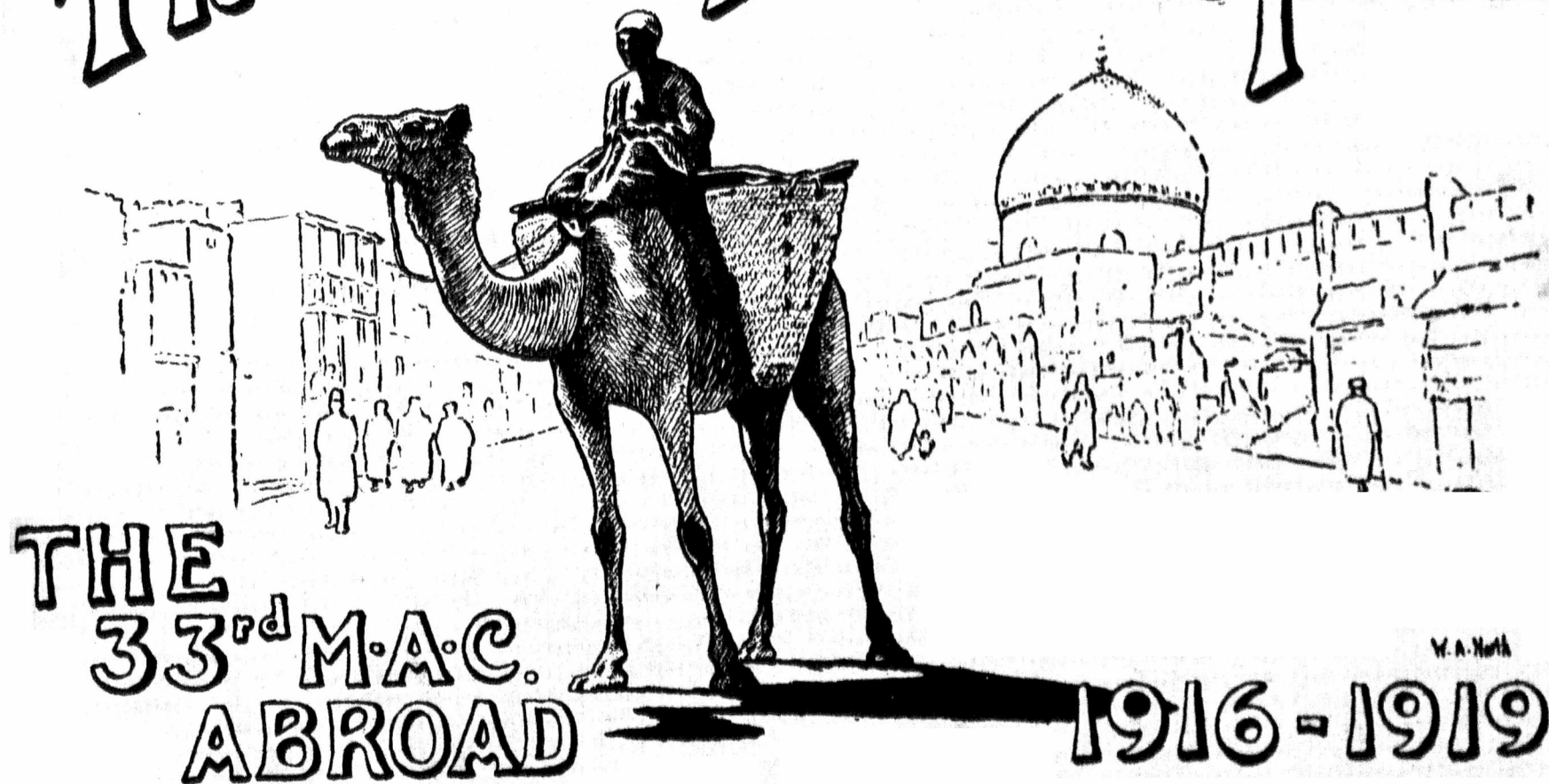


From The Gulf to The Caspian



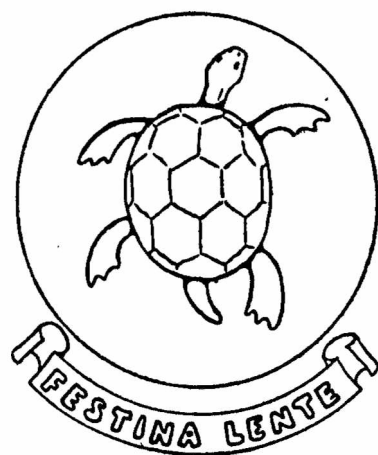
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THE
33rd M.A.C.
ABROAD

1916-1919

W. A. North





FROM THE GULF TO THE CASPIAN

BEING THE SOUVENIR BOOKLET OF THE
33rd. MOTOR AMBULANCE CONVOY WHICH
SERVED IN

MESOPOTAMIA AND NORTH PERSIA

1916 to 1919.

PRICE ^{SIX} ~~SIX~~ SHILLINGS NETT.

Written by various Members of the Unit who remain anonymous.

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FOREWORD

TO those of us who spent a considerable part of our Army careers in the 33rd M.A.C., the feeling of the Unit as a living entity always was, and always will remain, very real. Our memories of the hard but happy days of Army life, of our varied and novel experiences, of our grappling with life and death, and the "spacious" character of the ideas we absorbed, are all bound up with the history of the Unit.

Surely it is well that we should remember these days. The War reshaped many of our lives, and can we but keep alive what was best in the spirit of Units such as ours, the times of peace should be all the better for it.

With this in mind, some of us have attempted to get together a record of the doings of our Unit. Our literary style is, perhaps, not all that it might be, but we shall have served our purpose if we can provide for our readers a perpetual means of recalling those happy memories which we ourselves have of "the great days in the distance enchanted."

33 M.A.C. OPERATIONS.

1916
 Sept. 10th - Left Devonport
 Oct. 10th - Arrived Makina
 Nov. 7th - Left Makina for Sheikh Saad
 " 25th - One Section to Twin Canals
 Dec. 12th - **TWIN CANALS.** Hai operations.
 Detachments on duty:—INAM,
 SINN, UMMESSAAD FORD.
 1917
 Jan. 5th - **SINN.** Detts. on Duty:—Sinn, Imam,
 Bassouia, Pentagon, Ummessaad
 Ford
 " 29th - **ATAB.** All cars at Atab for operations
 before Shumran Bend. Evacu-
 ating Hospitals in this area day and
 night, throughout Feb.
 Feb. 26th - Shumran Bend. Moved daily with Troops
 on advance to Baghdad.
 Mar. 12th - **HINAIDI.** Detts. moved with Troops to
 Felujah and Baqubah, Sharoban.
 General operations on both flanks
 " 15th } Headquarters moved to **BAGHDAD** (Cav.
 Apr. } Bks.) Cars on General operations
 May } above Baghdad, both flanks.
 Baqubah, Sharoban, Yahudie, Mus-
 haidie, Sindeyeh, Beled, Harbah,
 Felujah, Sammara.
 May 10th - Removed Headquarters to new camp,
 Essalak Road, Baghdad.
 June } **BAGHDAD.** Local duty; Dett. duty at
 July } Felujah. Baqubah evacuations.
 July & Aug. - First **RAMADIE** Operations.
 Sept. - Baghdad local duty. Baqubah and Felu-
 jah
 Sept. & Oct. - Second **RAMADIE** operations
 Nov. - Baghdad local duty. Felujah, Baqubah,
 Sadiyah
 Dec. - Baghdad, Felujah, Baqubah, Akba.
 Adaim operations

1918
 Jan. }
 Feb. }
 Mar. }
 Mar. - Hillah. Hit operations. Operation Hd-
 qtrs. at Hit. Cars moved with troops
 Sahiliyeh, Khan Baghdadie, Haditha,
 Anah.
 Apl. - Hit operations. Hillah, Baqubah.
 May - Hillah. Baqubah, Kirkuk operations.
 Ain Lailah, Chaman Kupri, Kifri,
 Tuz, Khurmatli, Taug, Tazah, Kirkuk.
 June }
 July }
 Aug. }
 Baqubah, Abu Saida, Persian Line of
 Communication. Quasr-i-shirin to
 Kirind. Local Baghdad duty.
 Aug. 27th - **BAGHDAD.** Dett. at Kermanshah. Per-
 sian Line of Communication.
 Sept. 11th - **RUZ.** Convoy working Ruz to Enzeli.
 Workshops from Baghdad to Paitak.
 Persian Line of Com: Dett. at Ruz-
 Paitak. Dett. at Kermanshah and
 Kasvin.
 Oct. - Ruz. Moved to **KHANIKIN.** Dett. at
 Khanikin, Quasr-i-shirin, Paitak,
 Kermanshah, Kasvin. Work shops
 at Paitak.
 Nov. - **Khanikin.** Persian Line of Com: Bijar
 and Sinneh operations. Dett. at
 Quasi-i-Shiron, Kermanshah, Hama-
 dan and Kasvin. Workshops moved
 to Kasvin
KASVIN. On Dec. 6th the Unit was
 Transferred to "Norperforce"—
 Convoy duties from Hamadan to
 Enzeli was performed by the Unit
 from December to April/19

MESSAGES

From Major- General A. P. Blenkinsop, C.B., C.M.G., etc., late Director of Medical Services, Mes. Ex. Force.

“ This brief account of the 33rd M.A.C. is a record of hard work well carried out. While the Unit was in being it built up for itself an enviable reputation for efficiency and thoroughness, and it never failed to perform any duties it was called upon to do.

The officers and other ranks of the Convoy are now widely scattered. I wish them one and all pleasant memories of their soldiering in Mesopotamia and success for the future, whether in the Army or in civil life.”

From Lieut.-Col. F. W. Leland, C.B.E., D.S.O., R.A.S.C. Late Assistant Director of Mechanical Transport, Mes. Ex. Force

“ It is not possible to express my opinion suitably in a few lines with regard to that well-known and much appreciated unit, the 33rd M.A.C. I always had, and always will have, a soft corner in my heart for your unit and all its doings. Right from the first moment when I met it at Basrah, in October 1916, till the last month of 1918, I followed its movements with the deepest interest. The Unit is a splendid example of how two corps, namely the R.A.S.C. and the R.A.M.C. can combine and work with united and untiring efforts, for the welfare of their less fortunate comrades, whom they so often had to transport. This transportation entailed long hours, through all weathers, over all sorts and conditions of tracks, from the Hai to Baghdad, from Baghdad straight on to Samarra. On the left flank up the Euphrates and on the right flank over the Paitak Pass and along the now well-known Persian Line of Communication. It was a fine Unit, and its work is well worth recounting and putting into print. I should very much treasure a copy.”

AS OTHERS SAW US.

The most vivid recollection of the dear old "Thirty-Third" I have continually in my mind, is the scene of the "Thirty-third" on parade on the evening of Tuesday, the 27th February, 1917. The scene was laid on the left bank of the Tigris within a stone's throw of the bridge at Shumran bend. The men of the convoy had borne well the immense work and pressure of the evacuation of the wounded, and though tired out appeared on parade smart as ever. A personal message of thanks was conveyed to them from the Director of Medical Services, expressing his appreciation of the magnificent work done by the convoy in doing all that was required in the evacuation of the wounded.

Immediately after this message, a call was made for volunteers to take a large ambulance convoy through the night to the forward area. This meant the by no means pleasant task of driving cars in the darkness through Buddoo infested country. The call was, "the first man to reach a car may take charge of it for this special duty." The Sergt.-Major dismissed the parade, and then, what a scramble! Men vied with each other for possession of a vehicle. As I stood by and watched these good fellows, who, since the dawn of the 23rd February, had worked practically without ceasing, I could not help being deeply moved by their action. This keenness and devotion to their task of evacuation was ever present throughout the whole of the existence of the "Thirty-third." In no campaign have soldiers read with keener interest the message of their Chief—than did these when on the notice board on the morning of the 1st March, 1917, appeared this message:—

"Will you kindly convey to the O.C. No. 33 M.A.C. and all ranks of that Unit, the appreciation of the Army Commander of the good work performed by them on the 26th and 27th ult."

Later on all through the Campaign the men of the "Thirty-third" displayed the same keenness, vigour and *esprit de corps*. The sign of the tortoise always seemed to me to be the ideal for our convoy. Slow we had to be at first for the sake of the wounded, and as time went on for the sake of the dear old cars that had crossed and recrossed the desert for so many weary, dreary miles, but like the tortoise in the fable, with a reputation for getting there. The Convoy was regularly called upon to do the strenuous and difficult work. The fact that the good old "Thirty-third" was sent to tackle the task of taking the equipment of a large hospital from the plains of Mesopotamia to the other side of the mountains of Persia and to carry on evacuation of sick and wounded at the same time, was in itself sufficient warrant of the faith placed in the Convoy.

As I write I hear the hum and rattle of the good old engines, the churning of the cars in low gear through the sand or mud, and feel the quickening of the senses, as one's imagination takes one back to the busy days, the dull days, the hot days, the cold days, but, oh, such happy days in the good old "Thirty-third."

ROLL OF HONOUR.

<i>Name.</i>	<i>Date.</i>	<i>Place.</i>	<i>Cause.</i>
Pte. D. Barber ... A.S.C.	Feb. 26th, 1917 ...	Bassouia Bridge, R. Hai. ...	Accidently drowned
L/Cpl. W. Beattie ...	December 9th, 1919 ...	Kasvin ...	Diabetes
Pte. C. Cockle ...	April 15th, 1919 ...	Kasvin ...	Typhus
Pte. H. A. Coleman ...	"	Amara ...	Pneumonia
Pte. R. Eastwood ...	Nov. 23rd, 1918 ...	Baghdad ...	Accidently killed
Pte. C. J. Ellicott ...	Nov. 14th, 1917 ...	Baghdad ...	Small-pox
Sergt. R. Graham ...	Oct. 19th, 1917 ...	Baghdad ...	Accidently drowned
Pte. F. Kirk ...	"	Amara ...	Effects of heat
Pte. W. Ovens ...	Nov. 26th, 1919 ...	Kasvin ...	Pneumonia
Pte. D. Ritchie ...	Oct. 5th, 1918 ...	Kasvin ...	Influenza and Pneumonia.
Pte. A. Springham ...	Nov. 4th, 1917 ...	Baghdad ...	Small-pox

THE SOLDIER.

If I should die, think only this of me :

That there's some corner of a foreign field
That is for ever England. There shall be
In that rich earth a richer dust concealed ;
A dust whom England bore, shaped, made aware,
Gave, once, her flowers to love, her ways to roam,
A body of England's, breathing English air,
Washed by the rivers, blest by suns of home.

And think, this heart, all evil shed away,
A pulse in the eternal mind, no less
Gives somewhere back the thoughts by England given ;
Her sights and sounds ; dreams happy as her day ;
And laughter, learnt of friends ; and gentleness,
In hearts at peace, under an English heaven.

Rupert Brooke.

OCTOBER EVENING NEAR BASRAH.

(A Sonnet).

Swift the red even sun divinely dips,
Poised in surpassing glory for a space,
And as the heavenly lamp declines apace,
From out the fronting brightness upward slips
Full-orbed the orient moon. Soft, silver deeps,
Night's nobler moon forerunning, flood the face
Of erst th' untempered desert, nor seems trace,
Of ought unlovely : the spread landscape sleeps.

Sleeps,—save that, softly all and distantly,
Un-English voices drift to English ears,
Weird chant re-iterate ; or is heard the call
Of far, familiar bugle, suddenly :
And clear the cricket chirrups, where uprears
To the lit skies the date-palm still and tall.

Historical Sketch.

CATFORD—
MAKINA.

On August 5th, 1916, the 33rd M.A.C. was mobilized. On this eventful Saturday, the Ford cars and Peerless lorries were claimed at Kempton Park, and driven to Inchmery Road, Catford, there to await complete equipment and orders. In that "street of many delights" we slept on airy stretchers in ambulances, and were licked unwillingly into some shape, khaki drill was issued, and we *knew*, where before we had merely guessed. "Take plenty of health salts, and vaseline" was the advice given; "you're for Mesopotamia."

A few days at Pennington, and on September 7th the magic words, "pack up, we're off," completely severed our personal ties and associations in the district. We were away within two hours of the order, on a two hundred mile cross country run to Devonport. Except for the temporary loss of two of our party, who unwittingly and rather hurriedly quitted their vehicles, to rejoin us later somewhat bandaged, we suffered no casualty. Who doesn't remember the towns and villages we passed through, the night camps, the kindness of well-wishing and gift-bearing folks along the route, the almost bird's eye view of Bulford Camps on Salisbury Plain, and the glorious heather-covered moors of Devonshire? At Ivybridge, the "leaders" caught the remainder up, and the whole stately convoy proceeded with running accompaniment of cheers through Plymouth to the Docks, to be allotted space on H.M.T. "Medic." in the gathering darkness.

The following day, Sunday, September 10th, "Army Moving Day" we moved out of harbour, and a wicked-looking destroyer picked us up outside. Life aboard ship now occupied our thoughts—how to sling (and sleep in) a hammock, physical jerks, lifeboat drill, the successful negotiation of a trayful of food up an oscillating deck ladder, boat stations, putting one's watch forward, "starboard and port," ship's bells, and sternly reprimanding internal rebellion—till the coast of Morocco loomed on the starboard side, and presently we dropped anchor off the Rock, September 14th, aided by powerful searchlights from shore.

Next evening, destroyer leading and describing wonderful S-shaped curves, we moved off, keeping the African coast generally in sight, and on September 19th reached the back of the island of Malta. Showerbaths were now in great demand and shorts were worn—short. "No smoking after dusk," had been the order for some time, and we were glad to reach Port Said on September 24th, and be out of the danger zone. Did we see any submarines? Ah, now

Down the Canal at midnight (Gentlemen, you may smoke), past Suez with its huge oil tanks to Perim and Aden, after a "demmed moist and unpleasant" passage through the Red Sea; across the Gulf of Aden to the Persian Gulf, watching the schools of porpoises (some saw whales), the sharks, and the dolphins and flying fish playing round the ship; on to the Bar, where we transferred to the

sweet "Ellenga." We now revelled in trees and foliage on the banks of the Shatt-el-Arab, groves of palms delighting the eye—a welcome contrast to the bare, rocky shores of Arabia. **CATFORD—MAKINA.**

On October 10th, exactly a month from our leaving England, we disembarked at Basra, off the mouth of Ashar Creek, among the palms and in the midst of the thick "smell of the East." Makina, our destined camp, was some three miles away, and our tents set in the midst of a vast expanse of level dusty plain appeared as though they were in a snow field, so vivid was the moonlight. We were warmly welcomed by the 23rd M.A.C., who fed us and made us comfortable in our new home.

A month elapsed before the electrifying words were heard—"Up the line." On Tuesday, November 7th, 1916, all preparations for the great move were complete; the cars and the workshop were ready for their long trek; the clearing party to remain at Makina and later to follow up stream, had been detailed; the Quarter-master's stores had rid itself of much of its surplus stock, and re-inforced with many "jackets and knickers, drill," we departed. **MAKINA TO SHEIKH SAAD.**

The Convoy, with Captain Houston, R.A.M.C. and Captain Vallat, A.S.C. in front and the workshops' party bringing up the rear, formed a striking spectacle as it snaked itself past the hospital at Makina, then by the pontoon bridge over the Shatt-el-Arab and so away into the desert along the right bank of the river. And so began the most arduous motor trip that we had ever experienced. The track (where there was a track) took a fiendish delight in climbing and descending into nullahs of all sizes, in ploughing through sheets of fine sand and in passing over bridges but half completed. The gallant Fords, aided by the breakdown party with their picks and spades, did splendidly, rivalling the Somme tanks in their amblings, gyrations and ability in surmounting obstacles, or struggling through the powdery sand with the power of American railroad snow ploughs. If I were asked for one of the great engineering feats of the war, I should be tempted to point to the road between Makina and Sheikh Saad, and the engineers—the breakdown party of the 33rd Motor Ambulance Convoy.

And so day by day the sinuous queue of cars moved north. The elusive mirage of water and palm trees on the monotonously level horizon was pursued day after day. The desert Arab with his air of stoic calm, accompanied by his ring bedecked wife and nude picaninnies, occasionally watched our labours from his hut of mud and rags. Each night heard the racing of Ford engines and saw the glare of headlights as each driver was urged (!) to park his car in Army exactitude. And later we heard the pleasanter sound of the bubbling of stew or the peaceful tapping of the typewriter from the orderly room.

MAKINA TO SHEIKH SAAD. The bridge at Kurnah, near the confluence of the great twin rivers, was passed on the evening of the first day, and camp was pitched some miles north on the right bank of the Tigris, in the reputed Garden of Eden. Here we rested for repairs for two days, and so were enabled mentally to contrast this barren area with its white sand and few palms with luxuriant vegetation of Adam's garden "eastward in Eden." Here we were pestered by Arabs, probably from Kurnah selling eggs and dirty packets of Huntley and Palmer's biscuits. And in spite of the warning, "Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die," many of the 33rd risked it, and found it good, neither did they die.

On the morning of the fourth day we resumed our trek, and at the close of the day the cars formed square on an old artillery camp site, rich with manure, outside Amara. The next day saw the Convoy pass Ezra's Tomb. Qalet Saleh and the rest posts south of Sheikh Saad followed, and a week after our journey had begun we drove into the Rest Camp at Sheikh Saad which was in those days serving as the Advanced Base. It was here that we heard the horrible rumour that the authorities considered us somewhat of a white elephant.

Then came the move to another camp site near the Arab village. On November 25th a section under Lieut. Atteridge, had left for duty at Twin Canals, and on 5th December, the last portion of the Convoy arrived at Sheikh Saad. On the 6th heavy rain fell—the first fall we had experienced in Mesopotamia—and we soon realised the difficulty of transport work in Meso' mud. On the following day we had the misfortune to lose our first O.C., Capt. J. W. Houston, D.S.O., R.A.M.C. He was admitted to hospital at Sheikh Saad, and subsequently invalided to India. On the 12th, the remainder of the unit moved forward to Twin Canals, there and afterwards at other places, to disprove the white elephant theory and to demonstrate that the Thirty-third was one of the most, valuable arms of the Mes. Ex. Force.

TWIN CANALS. At Twin Canals we were able to hear now, the first time for many of us, the sounds of battle. Probably, too, some of us began to "get the wind up." Operations were in full swing, and it was evident to the most casual observer, that the British meant to make a big advance.

On the 13th December, two sections moved out from Twin Canals, in charge of Lieut. Atteridge and Lieut. Howell. The third section under Lieut. Evans subsequently assisted in evacuations connected with the Sann-i-yat operations. During the few days following the 13th, sections moved forward rapidly keeping in touch with the dressing stations and field ambulances, and often running night and day. During the operations on the Hai, sections of the Convoy did duty at Sinn, Ummesaad Ford, Twin Canals, Imam, Bassouia and Pentagon. Towards the end of December, Capt. W. K. Morrison, R.A.M.C. was posted to the Unit as Officer Commanding.

Christmas day saw the Unit scattered and practically nothing could be done in the way of "festivities." **TWIN CANALS.** Operations were rather quiet, but our neighbours, the artillery, prevented the days—and nights—from becoming too monotonous. There were, however, often whole days when it was impossible for a car to run owing to the thick mud which always existed after the "refreshing" showers.

On 5th January, 1917, the headquarters of the Convoy were moved from Twin Canals to Sinn, the **SINN.** Workshop section, under Lieut. F. H. Burcher, also being stationed there.

On January 8th the Shatt-el-Hai, ceased to be a dry bed, and became a "river" once more. About this time a Turkish-ex-British monitor dropped a few "visiting cards" perilously near one of our sections, and the members thereof began to think seriously of digging in. About the middle of January, a small section went to Twin Canals to work a Railway Rest Post.

On 20th January, the G.O.C.-in-Chief, General Maude, visited our headquarters' camp in order to inspect a mud plough—the invention of our O.C., A.S.C, Capt. F. W. Vallat. This novelty certainly did not "arrive" before it was badly needed. The headquarters of the Convoy moved to Atab, on January 29th, near the River Hai, the Workshop section remaining at Sinn. On the night of our arrival at Atab, we had wind and rain, thunder and lightning. Operations were now developing for the crossing of the Tigris and the capture of Kut. **ATAB.**

All cars eventually concentrated at Atab Camp which was near rail head, and for about a month, the Convoy was kept very busy, often by night as well as day, evacuating the field ambulances which were chiefly across the Hai. At Atab, we were often cheered by the sight of hundreds of Turkish prisoners being brought to rail head, and their condition reminded us that there must be somewhere even worse Q.M.S.'s than the one in the 33rd.

The camp at Atab, before we finally left it, had become probably, the smartest temporary camp that the Unit ever produced. Who is there in the "33rd" who has forgotten the celebrated "In" and "Out" entrance and exits, and the sweeping "carriage drive" which delighted the heart of a certain officer whenever he dashed up from Sinn? From Atab, 10 cars joined the Cavalry Division.

On 13th February the Convoy (less the above section) had a very busy day, carrying altogether 410 patients. On the 15th the patients carried were 261, on the 23rd, 232, and on the 24th, 367. For three days cars were unable to run owing to the muddy state of the roads caused by bad weather. This was the time when the Orderly Room had to be baled out before we could say "business as usual," and the clerk might have been drowned if he had slept an hour or so longer. It was also at Atab where H—— succeeded in "loisin th' parson," and where fur coats were first worn—no, not by Arab ladies—by our M.T. drivers.

**SHUMRAN
BEND.**

On the 23rd and 24th February, the troops crossed the Tigris at Shumran Bend ; and Kut and San-i-yat were evacuated by the Turks. Atab camp was evacuated by the " Thirty-Third " on the 26th, part of the Convoy being detailed to accompany the Cavalry Division, while the main portion was in attendance on the Infantry on the left bank of the Tigris.

**THE ADVANCE
TO BAGHDAD.**

—
CAVALRY.

The morning of February 22nd brought great joy to those attached to the Cavalry Division. Orders were received for all arms to " stand to " and eager expectancy was reflected on every face. " To Baghdad with the Cavalry "—could anything be finer ? It was an open secret that the Tigris was to be bridged, but where and when was the question eagerly asked. It was not, however, until the morning of the 24th, that A section—10 cars— left the Cavalry Camp and accompanied by the 13th L.A.M.B.'s passed through the wire and joined the Division at their rendezvous, slightly above Shumran.

The cavalry and cars immediately moved away but the ambulances remained at the Outpost until mid-day of the 25th when they moved forward, and from then until nightfall, helped the other sections of the Convoy to clear the field ambulances at the bridge-head to the rail-head at Atab. Crossing the bridge late that night the section parked near the bridge-head, at dawn moving forward and reporting to the Cavalry Field Ambulances about 8 miles up stream. From then until late afternoon the evacuation of patients—mostly Turkish—was rapidly accomplished, they being transferred to the hospital boat " Kamala " lying at the bridge.

The section now moved forward joining the Cavalry at their bivouac just above Baghalia. Next morning an early start was made and though the Cavalry was an hour ahead, with fast travelling the distance was quickly made up and the Section now followed right at their heels. After proceeding for a time close to the river a line straight across country was taken, touching the river occasionally at the head of a loop.

From the condition of the litter and debris left by the retreating army it was clear that the Division was hot on the heels of the rearguard and by the traces left it was evident that the rearguard was having a rough time from the monitors.

Though many stragglers, footsore, weary, and often wounded, gave themselves up it was not until evening that contact was established at Aziziyah. The Turks fled in great disorder but the advantage could not be pressed home and next morning the Division retired several loops down the river to await supplies. The Section along with some Vulcan ambulances pushed on ahead, but were compelled—on the appearance of a large body of mounted Arabs—to stop and make ready for defence. Cavalry came up and relieved the situation.

That afternoon all casualties were evacuated to the nearest Infantry Division, several cars being fired at en route. The following day the Division proceeded to Aziziyah. The 6th found the Section away early, a slight sand storm preventing good visibility. Engine trouble caused a halt to be made, which was fortunate, as most of the Division rode full tilt into the Turks before they were aware of their presence.

**THE ADVANCE
TO BAGHDAD.
—
CAVALRY.**

The battle of Lajj lasted until late evening, the cars running continuously through the night clearing the wounded to Aziziyah. Next day great difficulty was experienced in passing the marching Infantry Divisions to rejoin the Cavalry; this being only accomplished in the early morning of the 8th at Bawi near the Diala.

The Turks were now found to be in great strength covering Baghdad and the Cavalry was withdrawn, the Section being attached to the 3rd and 7th Infantry Divisions. During the pursuit, one car had been dumped and the occasional petrol difficulties had been largely solved by the generosity of the R.F.C.

At 4 a.m. on 26th February, 1917, in a very cold atmosphere (for Meso') we cleared out of the Atab camp, passed over the Hai at Bassouia Bridge, crossed the Tigris by a very fine pontoon bridge, and pitched camp in the Shumran Bend, near the 41st Field Ambulance. On all sides were evidences of the recent fighting. Cars were cleared and the evacuation of wounded commenced immediately. Chiefly for the work done on the 26th and 27th of February, the Convoy were specially thanked by the Army Commander, and the good work done by the unit was mentioned in despatches.

**INFANTRY.
SHUMRAN
BEND.**

A very unfortunate accident occurred on the 26th. Our heavy lorry, following on from Atab later in the day with the rest of our stores and baggage, was crossing the Bassouia Bridge over the Hai, when the bridge broke and the lorry and its driver, Pte. D. Barber, went through into the water. The lorry, of course, sank, and Pte. Barber, who evidently was unable to jump clear, was drowned.

During the next fortnight the troops moved rapidly on Baghdad, as the Turks were in full retreat. In this period, the Convoy had about 10 different camp sites, and on one occasion moved forward over thirty miles. Compare these movements with the advances on the Western Front! Owing to the rapidity of the British advance, to make arrangements for the evacuation of sick and wounded was indeed a difficult matter.

On the 28th we were at Imam Mahdi, and didn't we enjoy that bath in the Tigris! And didn't we cheer "H.M.S. Firefly" when having been returned to her rightful owners, she floated proudly down the river!

IMAM MAHDI.

THE ADVANCE TO BAGHDAD. On the 3rd March we were at Aziziyah, on the 5th near Zeur, on the 6th near Bustan, and on the 7th reached the limit of General Townshend's advance and passed the Arch of Ctesiphon. Can one wonder that in such a historic spot, the motor cycles of our two despatch riders should become suddenly "temporarily unavailable?"

—

INFANTRY.

When proceeding from Ctesiphon, some of us had miraculous escapes from being killed or wounded. On a "road" crowded with transport, including our Convoy, a limber carrying ammunition blew up and the road quickly presented the appearance of a battlefield. Nine men were killed and nineteen wounded. We had only one casualty, a despatch rider being wounded in the leg. (He was afterwards invalided to India). We quickly unloaded some of our cars and evacuated the casualties. That night we camped at Bawi, about 14 miles from Baghdad, and from here, on the 9th, 15 cars left us for duty with the First Corps in the Felujah operations. The remainder continued to work with the Third Corps. The 10th was the great day of dust and wind. Engines and drivers were choked with dust, we had dust for food, and dust for blankets. One man is reported to have said that he did not mind helping to conquer Mesopotamia, but he did certainly object to eating it.

BAGHDAD. On the 11th, the day the British entered Baghdad, we reached the Dialah Bridge, and on the 12th camped at Hinaidi, S.E. of Baghdad. From now until the 14th when the cars moved away again the chief occupation of the personnel was the lavish spending of back pay on eggs, fruit, milk, sweets and all kinds of germ-ridden food-stuffs which by all Medical text books, ought to have caused a wholesale migration to hospital—but didn't—and it was with sighs of satisfaction at the joys just passed, that the drivers on the morning of March 14th once more "cranked up" and in company with some divisional ambulances skirted Baghdad and Kazemain, and following the course of the railway line, Baghdad to Berlin, joined the 7th Division in time to start evacuating from the battle of Mushaidie Station.

The usual procedure was adopted, some cars evacuating from the forward area to the field ambulances and others evacuating from the field ambulances to the river. The cars which went to the river returned not having found the boat, causing the field ambulances to become congested. The greater portion of the Division bivouaced, but owing to victory being won so late in the day it was impossible to search the field for those wounded very late in the battle and though this was done next morning—20 ambulances helping in the search—very few were found alive, the night had been so bitterly cold.

Late that afternoon the ambulances were again sent to the river but again returned full, and it was not until noon next day that evacuation proceeded. On completion, the half Convoy returned to Baghdad.

On the 16th March, we moved our headquarters to a spot in front of the Turkish Cavalry Barracks near the North Gate of Baghdad. This did not prove exactly an ideal site as, although the Turks had fled, they, or their horses, appeared to have left many of their "intimate friends" behind, and they were evidently anxious to strike up a close (oh! so close!) friendship with their new masters. The Workshop Section joined headquarters on 5th April, but removed to a site near the Tomb of Omar on the 10th. While at Cavalry Barracks, we had sections working on both banks of the river, in operations around Bakubah, Sharoban, Yahudie, Sindeyeh, Beled, Samarra and Felujah. The Convoy moved to a more pleasant site by the river-side, on 10th May, 1917. **BAGHDAD.**

From March 12th, 1917, to September, 1918, the Convoy Base was Baghdad, and during that time its home was first the sandy square of the old Turkish Cavalry Barracks (and its workshop branch near Sheikh Omar's Tomb), and then the river bank site some one mile from the North Gate. It was tent life, and on the whole, healthy, with the river over the high bund on one side, the Dairy Farm on the other, and flanked by thick groves of date-palms and dotted with Arab villages and encampments, the Convoy settled down to work and play.

Camp life was smooth-running, the chief excitement being "Guard." The Arabs were marvellously cunning, and could extract rifles from almost anywhere most mysteriously, making guard-duty for the first few months somewhat nervy work. This was to some extent mitigated when the "Eiffel Tower" was erected. (Ugh! it was cold up there by that light in winter. And there wasn't always a kind Q.M.S. and a rum issue). A workshop was built and the sick cars enfolded therein. Providence sent a cyclone, demolishing it, and a better one was set up by our competent workshop staff. This served as a splendid Concert Hall for our "Chequers" Party and others. Detachments of cars operated with all forces; some cars to Felujah, some to Sharoban; others to Samarra, and many "also ran." In fact, the 33rd cars were like buttons, found on all the best regulated fronts.

Three months of this life, and a spell of bad luck fell on the camp. Small-pox broke out, and we were isolated for three weeks. Eventually, when quarantine was lifted, all the sick returned save two poor fellows, who had been claimed by this dread epidemic. About the same time we received the news that General Maude had also died. Somewhat upset by these happenings, we soberly resumed our duties.

Christmas provided an opportunity for relaxation. The rain cleared away for the occasion, and the Sports (serious and farcical), the dinner, and the concert, proved a huge success. Football, cricket, tennis (when the cars in the "park" ceased to run), swimming, and indoor games in the newly-erected "summer-house" were now in full swing.

BAGHDAD.

Arab coolies, under the watchful eye of our eagle-eyed prince of "coolie-wallahs," watered the "park" and roads in the hot weather, and dug irrigation channels and built bunds against the rainy season. "Y' Allah! Y' Allah!" the tindal cried, and the petrol tins flew to the river to be replenished. Arab skilled workmen also helped in the shops. Some of them did good work, too, though the fitters were hardly of European standard, "Sahib, me fitterchi—zian," did not exactly express the truth.

The villagers round about accepted us in good part, generally, selling eggs and fruit—eggs at prices varying from 16 to 8 for a rupee, and big watermelons for about 4 annas. Their homes are not clean, and in the rectangular space of the khan, fowls, donkeys, goats, fat-bellied children, dogs, and litter form a heterogeneous gathering. The walls of the houses are of mud, and only occasionally fall down. The men fish from their gufas, work on the fields or in the gardens, taking their produce to the city in huge shallow baskets. In the season, it is very interesting to watch the date-gatherer climb the rough palm trunks with his leathern girdle and tray. The women work hard and continuously, grinding the meal, baking cakes in earth ovens, feeding the animals, fetching water from the river, carrying bedding up to the flat roof and down again, and soothing babies. They have their reward, though, for they are allowed to wear nose-rings, bracelets, anklets, and most elaborate and extensive tattooing! When there's a death in the village, the still night is rent by the shrill "u-lu-lu-lu" of the wailing mother or widow. When a wedding feast is in progress tom-toms throb dumbly, and the air is pierced with rhythmic chanting and shrieking of pipes.

* * * * *

"Warrywan, Sahib? Cigrait, matchees, soap. Dekko, Sahib." So do the enlightened merchants in the narrow covered-in alley-ways of the bazaar greet the passer-by. Many are the "bargains" made by the trusting Britisher—at first. It is cool here in the hottest weather. Nevertheless, ices, limejuice (sometimes red in colour!) are very acceptable. From the often very tiny alcoves, and niches flanking the alley, you may buy (*not* for the first price asked, please) all sorts of silks, cottons and prints, (from Manchester or Japan), "verra good, Sahib, I assure to you," says the enterprising Jew salesman: fancy metal ornaments (Birmingham); leather goods, and boots and shoes, made in Baghdad or India; copper utensils from the Coppersmiths' Bazaar hard by, where the metal is hammered into shape in the midst of a clanking inferno; silver and gold ornaments from the Silversmiths' Bazaar, where a cross-legged workman will convert a Turkish sovereign into a ring for you while you wait; and antiques, real and faked, in the Persian carpet shops. A youth sidles up with outstretched palm. "Vonna buy a vatch, sair?" Another—"You vant beads, sergean'?"

In another part of the bazaar, a most bewildering conglomeration of smells assail the unwary traveller, **BAGHDAD.** fried-meat stalls, vegetables, fruits, spices and sweet-meats, the pungent smoke of Arab cigarettes, and singed cloth from the fez makers. Habitues of the native cafes sit, cross-legged and slipperless on the pew-like seats, smoking bubbling narghilehs and drinking tea or syrups. Here a money-changer juggles with rolls of silver, soliciting exchange. Up aloft a shrill piping from a balcony, calls attention to an Arab theatre, where one may witness the swaying, dancing and monotonous chanting of the "bootiful Baghdad belles."

If tired by this time, here is a European Restuarant offering as a titbit on the menu, *Braun Shtou*. Another rejoices in the proud proprietorship of "Cheap Jack," and under the gently-swaying punkahs, you may enjoy a cool rest, before taking the dusty Es Salek road back to camp.

* * * * *

The trip to Kazimain to see the golden domes and minarets of the mosque is well worth the trouble. Up to Mo'addhem and across the Tigris by gufa gives one the best whole impression of the mosque above the house-roofs, and the return can be made by the crazy horse-tramway (trams generally in pairs, in case one breaks down !) through old Baghdad.

* * * * *

The interest of the place, the many diversions of life on the Convoy in that Eastern setting, and the work (third place, please observe) gave everybody plenty of occupation—sufficient to annul by night the persistent efforts of sandfly and mosquito to dispel sleep. Perhaps the greatest charm of Baghdad to us was that it was un-Anglicised, and so everything was new and striking. Our life in Baghdad we may regard as a fine experience—to look back on.

During the intense heat of the midsummer months of 1917, the troops could do little but seek protective measures from the sun's rays in the day and the unpleasant activities of insects at night. Consequently, on the Tigris front, nothing of importance was attempted. G.H.Q. was firmly establishing itself in Baghdad where a great step forward had been made in establishing order out of the chaos left by the retreating Turks. Baghdad formed the southern apex of a rough triangle of land between the rivers Tigris and Dialah in British possession. It was never quite certain how far away the main body of the Turks was situated. Certainly, his advance units were in occupation of Baqubah a town lying some 33 miles north of Baghdad on the main camel route to Persia and the towns of northern Mesopotamia. This town was important also as the centre of a cultivated and well developed fruit growing district. For these reasons and probably also to strengthen the British hold on Baghdad, towards the end of August a general advance was made against the town. The operations were short and decisive. The Turk was driven out and he retreated to Sharoban, a town some 30 miles further north. Driven from there, he retreated to the Jebal Hamrin hills and dispersed.

**OPERATIONS
FROM
BAGHDAD.**

—
**BAQUBAH and
SHAROBAN.**

**OPERATIONS
FROM
BAGHDAD.**

—
**BAQUBAH and
SHAROBAN.**

As usual, the 33rd M.A.C. was called upon to assist in these operations. Indeed at this time it was the only field M.A.C. with the force. A section of the convoy followed the troops to Baqubah where H.Q. was established in a Khan on the Baghdad side of the river. From this base, the cars followed the troops to the capture of Sharoban. A feature of these operations was the use made of Ford vans for conveying troops at night. Here was the first instance in Mesopotamia of the flying motor column which later did so much excellent service. The troops were swiftly carried by night to the vicinity of Sharoban where they completely surprised the enemy. The cars of the 33rd formed a part of this column. Though casualties fortunately were not great in number, the effect of the heat was largely felt and the ambulance cars were ever at work. Altogether it was a most trying time for drivers and orderlies, but they carried on magnificently and well deserved the praise which was given them by G.H.Q. Sometimes the daily run to Sharoban was exciting owing to the presence of "Irregulars" who sniped from the shelter of buildings and villages. The Red Cross seemed a most attractive target. Consequently the convoy was escorted by armoured cars. Baqubah itself was perhaps the most pleasing of all the towns in Mesopotamia but Sharoban was indescribably filthy.

Looking back upon this "stunt" one must admit that there was not much war about it; but the hardships caused by heat, dust and lack of water were great and the operations were of extreme value to the future plans of the M.E.F.

**FELUJAH AND
THE FIRST
RAMADIE
OPERATIONS.**

The order—"You're detailed for the Felujah run to-morrow" was not one that caused transports of joy to the individual addressed. 100 miles of desert, sand and heat with a wind against you during those 12 awful days of July, that felt as though it had come from the mouth of the pit itself. In the early days, 'twas the worst road ever invented—it was too bad to have just happened. An early start, but always a late finish, dud tyres, perished tubes, crippled cars! Oh, the joys of those runs to Felujah!

Two and occasionally three times a week a Convoy left the M.A.C. Headquarters at 3 a.m. and arrived at Felujah any time of the same day up to 9 p.m., the time of arrival being largely governed by the prodigality or otherwise of the motoring joys heretofore mentioned. A stay for the night at Felujah and after unloading the medical stores or comforts taken on the out journey, patients were loaded for the return journey and then was repeated the performance of the previous day. Sighs of relief and satisfaction on the part of the drivers when the camp was reached, and anxious enquiries from the Orderly Room, "How many cars have you dumped this trip?"—and another Felujah run was finished.

During July a small Section operated with the brigade that moved from Felujah against Ramadie. When this brigade, compelled by the intense heat and insufficient numbers, returned to Felujah the Section trekked back to Baghdad and "routine duties."

Following on the unsuccessful operations against Ramadie in July, the operations in September, 1917, which resulted in the final capture of Ramadie were of a really brilliant character, the perfect co-ordination of the various services making it a model of its kind. Right from the commencement there was evidence to show the splendid preparation made by "the Staff"; which had its full reward in complete and overwhelming success.

SECOND RAMADIE OPERATIONS.

In conjunction with the divisional ambulances the 33rd evacuated, by sections, from the line to the hospitals at Baghdad, using first Felujah and later Madij as the base for the sections working the forward area. Though the road and running conditions were difficult a good service was maintained throughout. Only one section—under Captain Evans—saw anything of the actual fighting. This section whilst clearing the forward area came under heavy shell fire.

Many sick Turkish prisoners were carried, Ramadie being a hot bed of disease. It was from here that the small-pox epidemic started, which unfortunately affected the 33rd, they being the first Unit to go into quarantine. About two days after the fall of Ramadie a night surprise against Hit for the purpose of blowing up dumps was organised. About 120 Box Fords each carrying four or five infantry men, several armoured cars, and 25 of our ambulances formed the flying column. A start was made about midnight and at first good progress was made; later very difficult country was struck and progress was slow. The head of the column frequently halted for the purpose of keeping the column together, and of course the 33rd being the tail came in for more than its fair share of blame for holding the expedition back.

When the day broke the column was still several miles from the spot selected as the jumping off place for the surprise attack. As all possibility of a surprise had now failed, the expedition returned, much more quickly than they had come, daylight shewing with far greater clearness the tremendous road difficulties that had been overcome and the wonder of it was, not that we had arrived late, but that we had ever arrived at all.

The Cavalry operations on the Adaim were the shortest that a section of the Convoy ever took part in, as from leaving Headquarters, Baghdad, to returning, only 12 days elapsed. **THE ADAIM.**

The Infantry Divisions moving from near Table Mountain were advancing in the direction of Tuz Kurmatli capturing Quara Tappah and Kifri en route. It was the endeavour of the Cavalry working up the Adaim river—a river running from the Persian hills and joining the Tigris just below Samarah—to get through the foothills (the Jebel Hamrin range) and so cut off the retreating Turk.

But "Johnny Turk" was fully alive to this move and held the only accessible pass through the range, in great strength, guarding it until his infantry divisions had made good their escape.

THE ADAIM.

If the success achieved was not quite as complete as had been expected, much ground was captured and a very valuable jumping off place secured, for those operations which later resulted in the capture of Tuz, Tauq and Kirkuk.

The evacuations were carried out under ideal conditions. The Divisional camp was situated at Chal Khana, right under the shadow of the hills the Division was attempting to force. From there to Akab on the Tigris, at which spot the hospital boat lay, the going was splendid, the terrain being absolutely level, over 50 miles without even the smallest nullah or bump, and this gave the drivers the opportunity to open out that they had long wished for. Not that they had any option in the matter, ambulances were included in the Food Convoy which ran daily under armoured car escort, and they had to travel at the speed of this Convoy.

HIT AND ANAH.

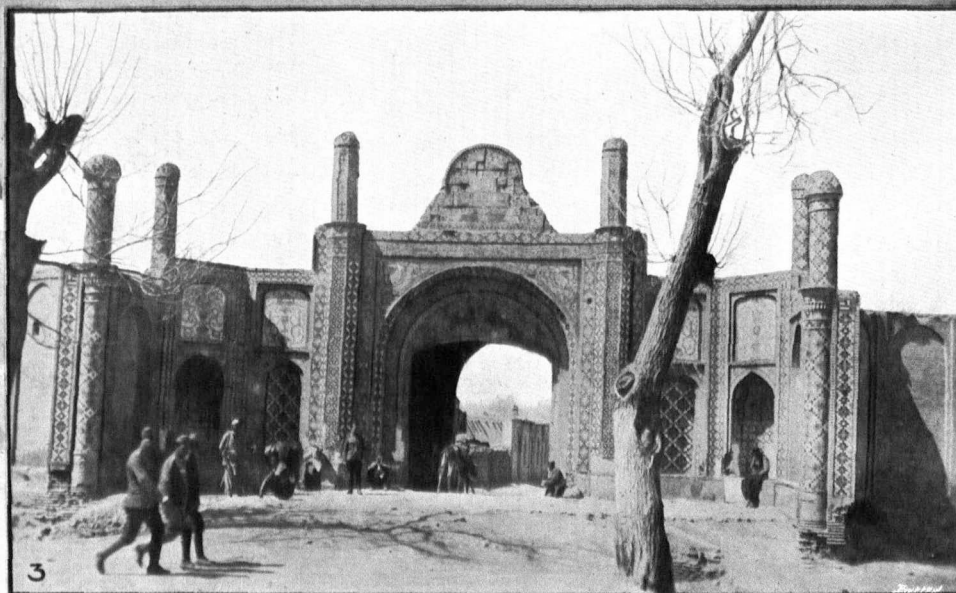
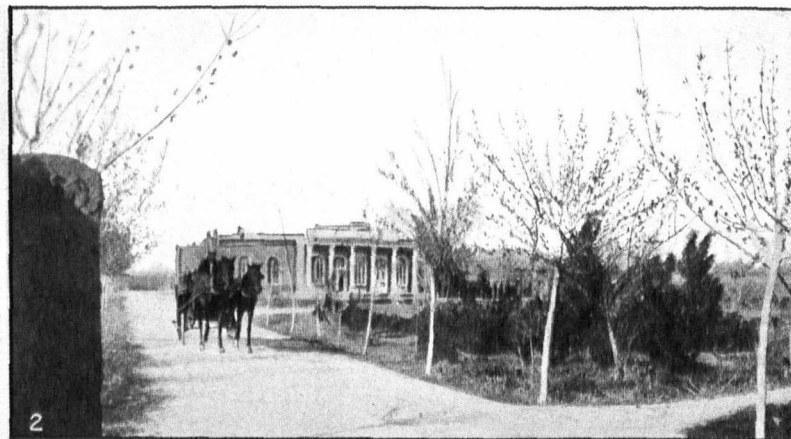
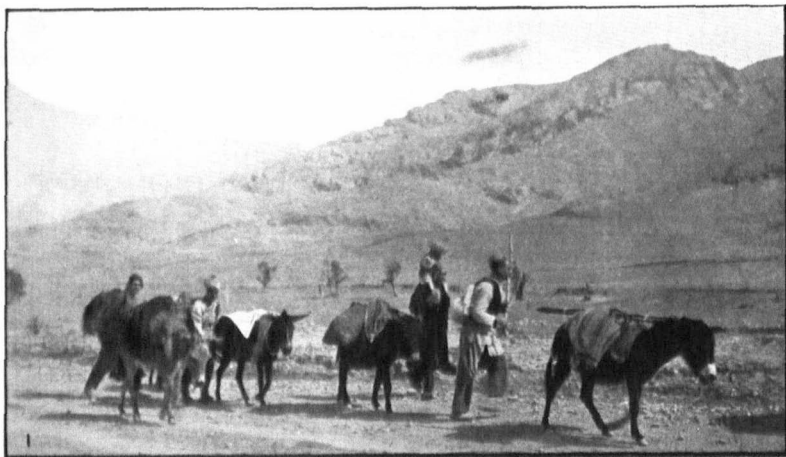
On 12th March, 1918, orders were received at headquarters, for every available car, and almost all personnel, to proceed to the scene of operations at that time developing on the Euphrates Front above Ramadie. On this occasion the "Thirty-Third" did one of its celebrated lightning moves. In just over an hour after the receipt of the order, over forty ambulances were on the road, carrying the tents, stores and equipment (most of them in use an hour before) necessary for a prolonged "stunt". After short halts at Felujah and Ramadie, the Convoy reached Hit, about 103 miles by road from Baghdad, on the 14th. We camped to the north of the town by the side of the river, and not far from one of the celebrated Persian wheels, used for the irrigation of the land. We were now in the region of bitumen, sulphur and gypsum, and much hillier country than any we had seen in Meso'. From Hit the Convoy did several runs to Ramadie and Dibban to take down patients and bring back petrol. Here also on the 23rd, Lieut. H. P. Latham, A.S.C., joined the Unit. On the 25th, headquarters moved to Sahiliyah leaving a detachment and tents at Hit.

Early on the 26th the attack on Khan Baghdadie took place, and the Convoy moved off in two sections—one, in charge of O.C. Convoy and Capt. Atteridge, to follow up the main attack through the hills towards Haditha; the other, under Capt. Rees and Lt. Davies, to proceed with the Mobile Column which was to operate on the Turks' right flank. The Mobile Column Section had a strenuous but thoroughly interesting and even amusing time. 450 cars composed the column and carried infantry, engineers, machine gunners and supplies and we had 25 ambulances.

Until nearly the end of the battle of Khan Baghdadie we hung about behind a high bluff where although we were hidden from them, the Turkish guns managed to find us with some small stuff. When we did move on at top speed across the open ground we arrived just in time for the surrender of the main body of Turks. From there through the next two nights and days we pushed on steadily

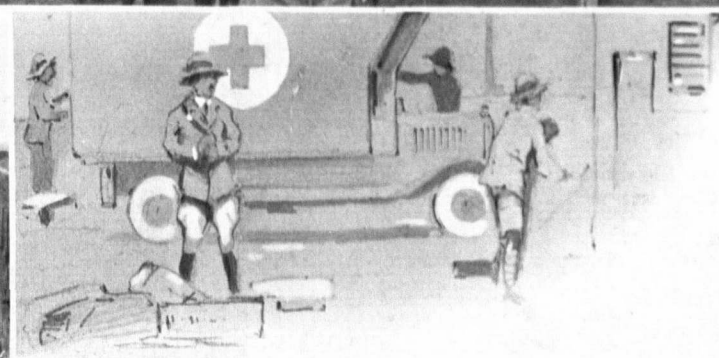
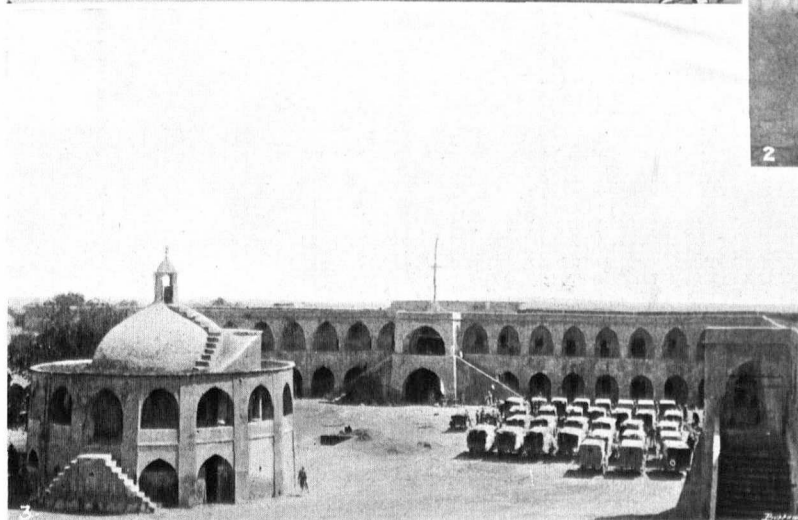
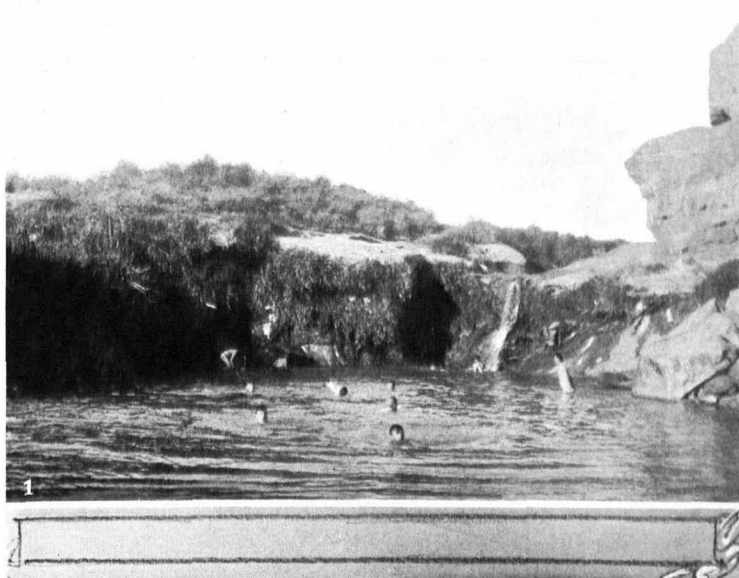


GENERAL GROUP 33RD M.A.C.



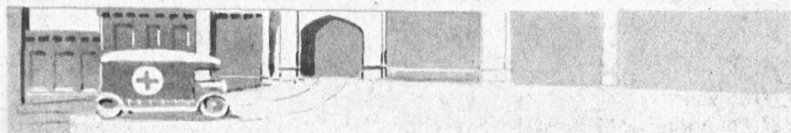
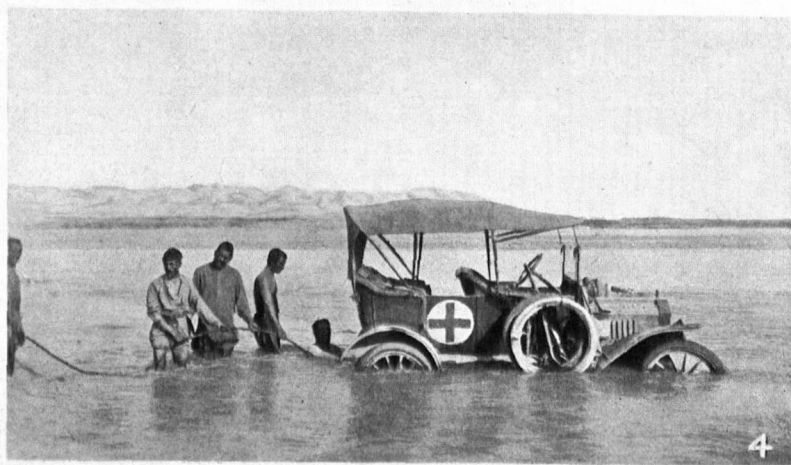
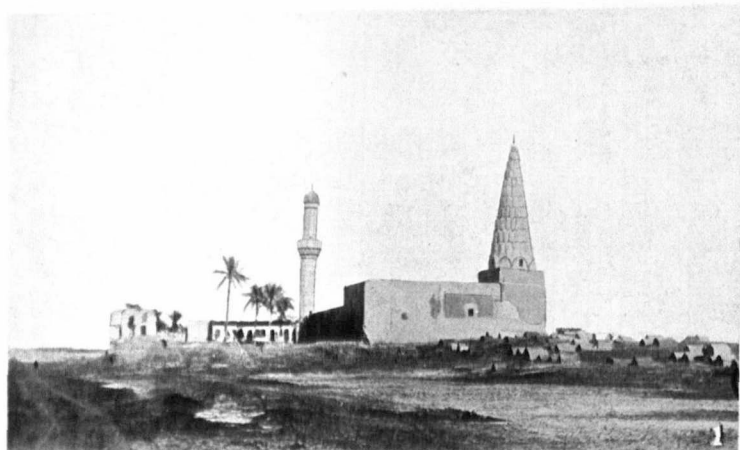
1. A PERSIAN ROAD SCENE.

2. THE RUSSIAN CLUB.
3. KASVIN GATE.



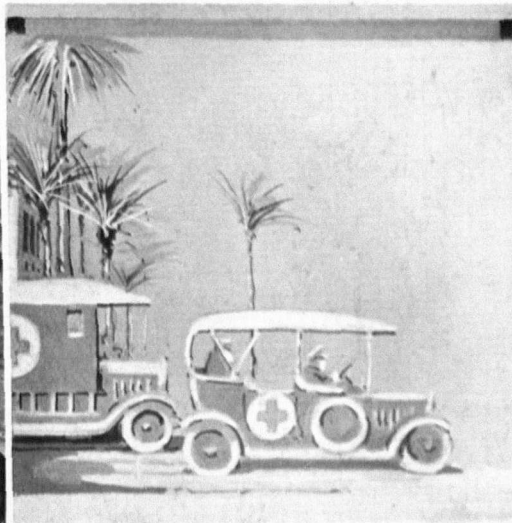
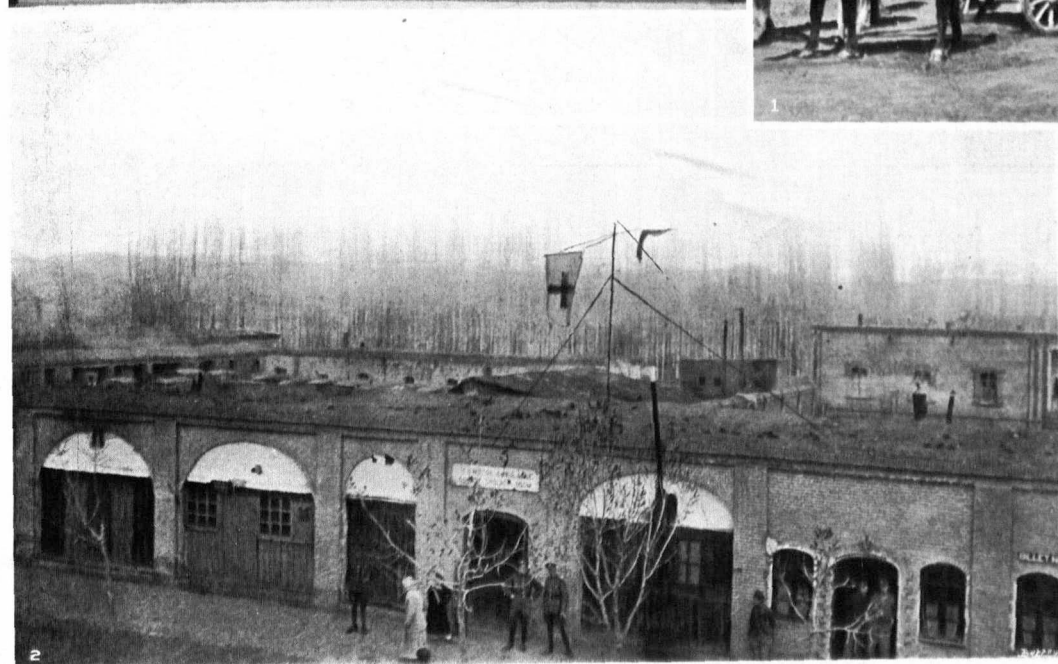
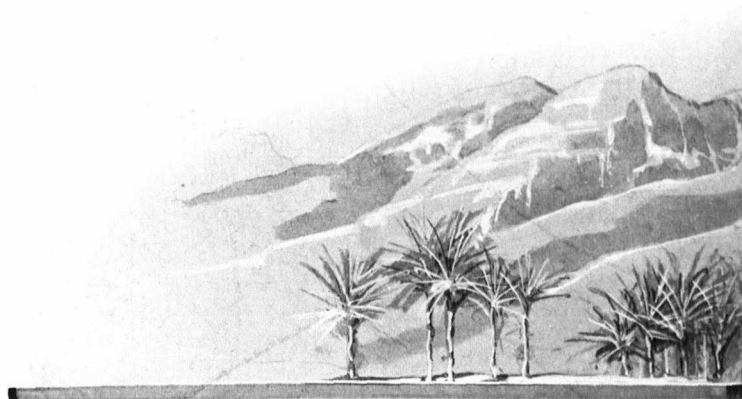
1. AIN -LAILAH.
3. KIRKUK HOSPITAL.

2. MEDICAL PRISONERS.



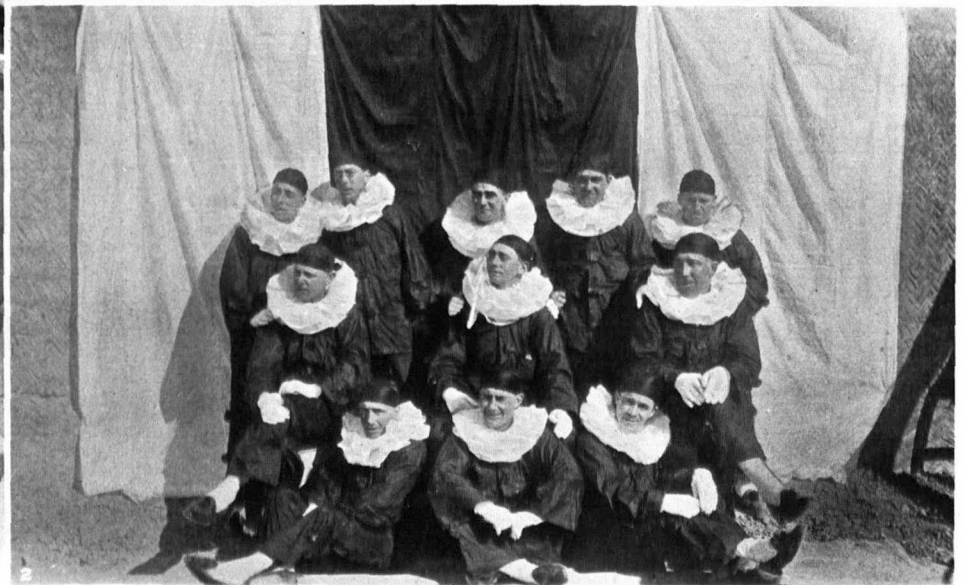
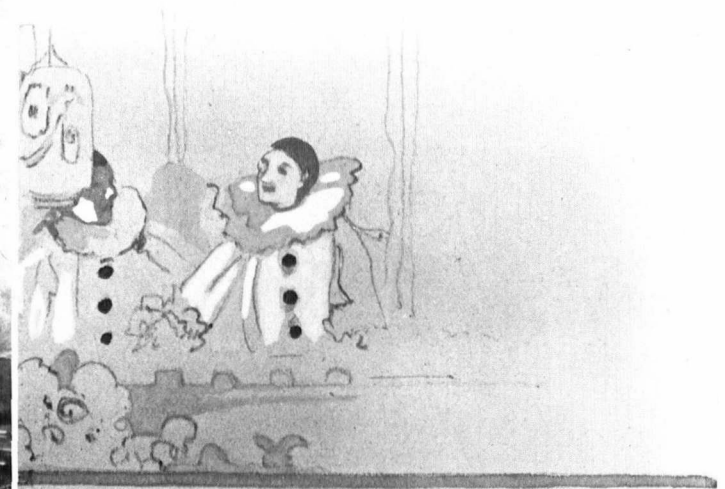
1. OMAR'S TOMB.
3. ARABS AT WORK.

2. XMAS SPORTS.
4. A "FORD" IN THE RIVER.



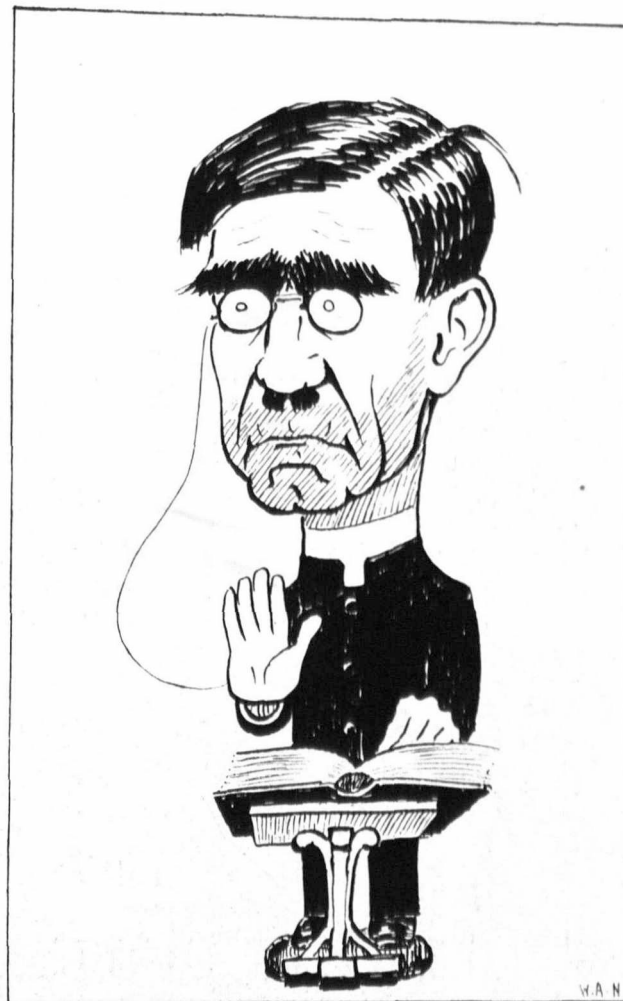
2. KASVIN BILLETS.

1. DUD CARS AT KASVIN.



1. BAGHDAD CAMP.

2. THE CHEQUERS.



" Remember where you are ! "

W. S. MUNSON in his famous Monologue "MARY HAD A LITTLE LAMB."

up the Euphrates in pursuit of the flying enemy, and the whole route was lined with men surrendering and with signs of the hurried flight of others. We reached Anah, our furthest point on the second day and here had to drain our cars of petrol to allow the armoured cars to go on to the rescue of Col. Tennant who was being hurried along as a much prized prisoner by the retreating Turkish H.Q. staff. The operations were entirely successful, and resulted in the capture of about 6,000 prisoners, the whole of the Turkish Army on the Euphrates. During the next few days, all cars were very busy evacuating patients from Anah (about 200 miles from Baghdad), Haditha, and Sahiliyah to the hospitals at Hit. After evacuating all casualties down the line to railhead at Dibban, the Convoy eventually returned to Baghdad on 14th April. **HIT AND ANAH.**

"Have you heard the news? A Section is leaving for Hillah to-morrow. Won't it be glorious to see the ruins of Babylon?" "Not it! I don't want to see any ruins. I've seen enough of this country already. What the dickens are a few old bricks, anyway? Let me see a good potato pie, that's more in my line." "What's for dinner? Bully again—pah—I'll bet the sergeants have got fresh meat." Conversations as varied in tone and temper and as indicative of differences in thought and temperament as the above, could be heard in the camp when it became known that the Hit stunt was practically over, and that a big Section was going to Hillah. **HILLAH.**

Many of the selected were pleased at the prospect of striking fresh ground and especially ground of such famous and historical interest; many didn't care a jot; any place in Mesopotamia was the same to them—alien—and many there were who, not selected, were frankly envious of their comrades' good fortune.

The Section under Captain Atteridge moved to Hillah from Hit *via* Felujah and Baghdad, the first night stopping at Felujah and the second night at our own camp at Baghdad.

The first run from Baghdad to Hillah proved a very enjoyable one. The intensely cultivated country round Hillah—the high banks of the irrigation canals with their short steep bridges—the distant mounds of ruins both to left and right, showy Arab horses with their gaily dressed riders, made it seem almost as if we had been transported to a different country.

And then that crazy contraption over the Shat-el-Hillah that passed for a bridge! It required Class A drivers to hop those cars from planking to boat and boat to planking, but it was safely accomplished.

**HISTORICAL
SKETCH—
HILLAH.**

The political disturbances that had arisen at Najef took longer to quell than the authorities had anticipated. The extreme sacredness of the city to Mohammedans made the political situation a very delicate one, and so operations had to be conducted slowly and with great care. For several weeks the Section, using first Hillah and later Baghdad as a base, made two or three runs a week clearing the casualties from this area to the C.C.S., at Baghdad until at length the duties were taken over by the 40th M.A.C.

During the stay at Hillah, opportunity was given for men to see the excavated portion of the ruins of Babylon, and also the alleged Tower of Babel. Some were even so fortunate as to get a sight of the Hindiyah Barrage, that fine piece of engineering work built by Sir James Willcocks. We counted ourselves lucky in thus being enabled to view sights and scenes that thousands of less fortunate men the world over have vainly longed to see.

KIRKUK.

About a week after the return of the Convoy from Hit to Baghdad and while the section was still down at Hillah, operations began again on the Kurdish border and all available ambulances were sent up to work in conjunction with the 39th M.A.C. in evacuating from the 13th Division and the Cavalry.

Our first camp was at Ain Lailah in a gorge of the Jebal Hamrin mountains. Who can ever forget the bathing pools there or the thunderstorms by night? The successful battle of Tuz Khurmatli meant heavy work for us and on our first sixty mile run, returning loaded, on greasy tracks at mid-night, we found the Ain Lailah pass blocked by overturned and damaged supply vans, the first day's work, under active service conditions, of Indian drivers. Not for the first time the Convoy men became road makers and turned their hands to repair the famous Sakl Tutan pass in case it should be needed for evacuation as an alternative route. It proved however, to be too steep for loaded cars.

Following the rapid British advance, we went on to Tuz, Tauq, Tazah and finally to Kirkuk, a most interesting place, delightful for many things but in a state of acute starvation and of indescribable filth—a condition of things which we came always to associate with the Turkish occupation of a place.

The new route *via* Kifri and Chaman Kupri back to the hospital base at Abu Saida was now opened, long and tedious were the runs, every day and all day through rivers and over mountains, but everyone enjoyed working with the one all-white division left in the country.

Our ambulances which had done practically two years of incredibly hard running in the country began, in spite of superhuman efforts of the workshops, to shew signs of a general breakdown, and handing over the routine work to the newer 39th M.A.C., we were withdrawn to Baghdad once more for complete overhaul. It should be set on record here that in the opinion of those competent to speak, no Workshop in the whole force did better work than ours. The matchless resource and adaptability which kept our cars on the road and which made temporarily serviceable cars out of unserviceable material, is to the lasting honour of the Officers, N.C.O.'s and men of the Workshop staff.

KIRKUK.

After the Kirkuk operations the Unit was again divided into sections. One of these was posted to the 14th Division, to maintain medical communications between Persia and Khanikin;

**THE PERSIAN
BORDER.**

The Dunster Force was operating in North Persia and continually sending down casualties which eventually reached the base hospitals at Baghdad. This particular strip of the Line of Communication was exceedingly difficult to work for three reasons :—

- i. Its great length—from Kermanshah in Persia to Khanikin on the border of Mesopotamia was about 150 miles.
- ii. The very rough and mountainous nature of the roads, which was quite unsuited to Ford cars.
- iii. The exceedingly steep and long mountain pass at Paitak.

It is no exaggeration to say that the cars were more knocked about on this run than at any previous time. The section consisted of 15 cars from the Unit, together with 15 cars from other M.A.C.'s, or from Field Ambulances. All were under the command of the 33rd M.A.C. officers. At first the run was done in three stages—Kermanshah to the top of the Paitak Pass; the top of the Pass to Qasr-i-Shirin—and thence to Khanikin. The double journey in the latter two stages occupied one day each and from Paitak to Kermanshah, two days were required for the return journey.

The work was constant, and being performed during the hottest part of the year, it proved very trying to men and cars.

There were several accidents to the cars on the Pass, and at last this feature became so alarming that ambulances were forbidden to do the daily run up or down the Pass. A "Peerless" lorry was fitted out as a temporary ambulance and used to "ferry" the Pass. In spite of the heavy work,

**HISTORICAL
SKETCH—
PERSIAN
BORDER.**

there were compensations. Those who worked on the top of the Pass lived in a climate many degrees cooler than that on the plains, and the country was cultivated and well watered and altogether more like the homeland. Those who lived at the H.Q. camp at Qasr-i-Shirin enjoyed in their scanty leisure time, fishing and bathing in the swiftly flowing river. The men who were sufficiently strong swimmers to shoot the rapids in this stream will never forget the exhilarating adventure and pleasure of it.

In spite of hard work, the section was very happy and even felt regret when this work ended. Perhaps this special work carried out with none of the excitement and incentive of an actual campaign was deserving of considerably more praise than was actually given by the authorities. Sometimes the monotonous daily task well done is more valuable than the brilliant dash of an exciting adventure—who knows?

**PERSIAN LINE
OF COMMUNI-
CATION.**

(From this time onward, Baghdad ceased to be the base of the Convoy), though retained for a period by a small party pending developments.

As the 33rd M.A.C. had been detailed for duty on the Persian Lines of Communication, the Convoy (less the detachments at Qasr-i-Shirin and Kermanshah) with a few attached cars, left Baghdad for Ruz on 27th August, 1918. The Workshops were to follow later, and a dump was also left as we did not know definitely whether we should return to Baghdad or not.

Travelling *via* Baqubah and Sharoban, we soon arrived at Ruz and pitched our camp not far from railhead. We had not been many hours there before we found that Ruz was specially noted for whirlwinds of dust.

On the 6th September a detachment of 15 cars, under Capt. Atteridge, left for duty at Kasvin, in North Persia, and on the same day the Workshop Section, under Lieut. Saunder, arrived at Ruz. Three days later the Workshops moved to Paitak, at the foot of the Persian Mountains, and on the 15th another section, under Lieut. Davies, departed for duty at Kermanshah (Persia).

During our stay at Ruz, the Headquarters section, with some attached cars, chiefly from the 39th and 40th M.A.C.'s were busily engaged in transporting the stores and equipment of No. 1 British General Hospital (moving to Hamadan) from the railhead to the foot of Paitak Pass. About 80 tons were taken by our cars, and on the return journeys, patients were evacuated from Paitak, Qasr-i-Shirin and Khanikin to Ruz. At this time the Syrian refugees were travelling down to

Baqubah, and the cars often picked up the exhausted or sick, and brought them on to the refugee camp at Ruz. The weather for September, was exceptionally hot. The transport work was not entirely to the liking of a motor ambulance convoy, but it was very necessary, and other means of transport were unobtainable at the time. **PERSIAN LINE OF COMMUNICATION.**

On the 11th October, the headquarters of the Convoy were moved to Khanikin as this was a more convenient station for the evacuation. On the 17th we celebrated the "abdication of the Kaiser, and the capitulation of Germany," but found out next morning that the news was somewhat premature. But we had had our "Ramsammie" at any rate! **KHANIKIN.**

On the 30th, our O.C. (Capt. W. K. Morrison, D.S.O., R.A.M.C.), having been posted to the 18th Division, left us to take up his new duties. Capt. J. R. Rees, R.A.M.C. was appointed in his place, and proved a popular and worthy successor. About the same time Lieut. H. P. Latham, A.S.C. was transferred to the 39th M.A.C. There was joy at Khanikin on November 1st, when news came through that Turkey had "packed up," and three days later came the news of Austria's capitulation.

We must not fail to record the sad death of "Billy," the Bhisti's pet sheep. On 8th November he ate a bar of carbolic soap and in spite of all our efforts, (for was he not destined to form part of our Christmas dinner?) he died a few hours later. He was buried in the palm grove with all rites and ceremonies due to his rank.

On the 11th November we had atrocious weather, but that was soon forgiven when we heard in the evening that Germany had accepted our armistice terms, amounting to practically unconditional surrender. We celebrated the good news on the twelfth by means of a sing-song (over which Capt. Forbes-Leith presided), a supper, and an issue of various rare and expensive liquids.

On the 24th our Workshops left Paitak for Kasvin, and on the 30th the Convoy left Khanikin for Kasvin, having been transferred to the North Persian Force.

On September 5th, 1918, a detachment of 15 ambulances, one touring car, the repair "spider" and the Talbot with luggage and liquid car-food, left Ruz en route for Kasvin, somewhere in N.W. Persia. **DUNSTER-FORCE.**

Through the hills, and across a bare bleak waste to Khanikin, that green palm ribbon trailing athwart the yellow plain; (just past the town, someone shouts "Boundary!" we count four, and pass on);

**DUNSTER-
FORCE.**

Qasr-i-Shirin comes in sight round a bend in the hills, a grey mass of houses standing apparently on top of each other; alongside the ancient aqueduct built by the successful suitor for the hand of the Queen of the Castle of Sweetness, and we reach the delightful Alwand stream. We may now drink unchlorinated spring-water! In the gathering dusk, the hills are clad in purple light, reminding one of heather-clad Scottish moors. Near here, is a stream that *runs uphill*. Oh, yes! It cannot be doubted!

Jackals were busy as we arrived at Pa-i-tak in the dark . . . From this point the road ascends the pass, some 1500 feet in three miles. We toiled and pushed, past Alexander's Arch, not having time to "dekko," being too anxious to reach Tak-i-Girreh. The country now grows more verdant, and in the ever-widening valley, grow holly, beech, and hawthorn trees. Harir is left, sheltering at the foot of the hills, and we are glad to enter the tree-shaded lanes of the gardens of Karind, the first of the poplar-ringed villages. Black and green grapes here are very luscious to a parched and sanded throat. The village itself, in a sharp cleft of the hillside, has a unique system of water-carriage, hill streams being diverted from tier to tier of houses for all purposes. (For further information, see the Book of Blom, chap. xii., par. 17).

Shortly afterwards, near Harunabad, with its quaint-hatted Persian Kurd guards, a well-veiled woman leaves the stream with a full goatskin of water on her back, and crosses the licourice-covered plain to her Bedouin camp a mile away. Houses (alas! mostly untenanted and dilapidated) are of stone, which is plentiful here. Different to stoneless Mesopotamia!

Up another hill, and suddenly a vista meets the eye of a corkscrew road leading down to a vast level plain, with a green-set village in the middle distance. Far beyond this are the rimming heights of the encircling mountains. We pass through a gaily-decked crowd of refugees—Armenians, Assyrians, and Jelus—cultivating the acquaintance of the ubiquitous "raggi" or watermelon—and reach the village of Mahaidasht, with its spacious Persian bazaar windows.

We pushed on up "Dead Mule Hill"—so called because of a rapidly-decaying specimen of the tribe, placed just where assistance was needed in helping cars round a sharp bend—and came in sight of the square watch-towers and houses of Kermanshah. Circumambulancing (pardon! circumambulancing) the city, and passing along a typical English country lane, we mounted to the camp. Kermanshah is a fine, big city, but rumour speaketh deprecatingly of its internal sweetness.

Bisitun Rock with its famous Tablet and Picture is some twenty miles along the road to Asadabad, and our second "big" pass. "Get up as far as you can." Then stop—and push—and stop.

Never mind the car at the bottom of the declivity. It isn't ours. The cup of "char" at the top was nectar . . . Down the other side is a joy-ride. One has time to note the closely-veiled Persian lady on horseback, with small stockinged feet thrust into heel-less slippers; a smart two-horsed vehicle following, the appointments of the carriage and horses being superb.

**DUNSTER
FORCE.**

Hamadan can now be seen with the snow-tipped mountains towering behind and around. We notice some fine houses and chateaux, very picturesque with their wide windows and colonnaded verandahs. The shops look neat and clean—on the outskirts,—especially near the big carpet factory. It is cold in Hamadan, due to its great altitude, 6,000 feet above sea level, with mountains of 14,000 feet close by.

From this city to Kasvin, the Russian toll-road runs, a fine stone-bedded way that is "death on tyres." Solidly built khans dot the route, affording shelter to travellers. We negotiate the Aveh pass successfully, and skim across the verst-marked plain till the domes and minarets of Kasvin appear in sight behind the poplar-lined gardens. We enter by the Resht Gate, and eventually take position in a typical Persian garden, with fruit trees, tomato beds, and large house with ornamental pool in front. . . .

Next day, September 13th, a party set out for Zinjan, to bring in wounded and sick. On our way the English bank manager from Zinjan, met us, having had orders to quit. There were rumours of the Turks cutting in behind us, and of a sudden retracing of our steps, but we finished our job, though the R.A.M.C. were very nearly (!) issued with rifles.

Thereafter our work consisted mainly in evacuating sick and wounded of the Dunster Force from Enzeli on the south shore of the Caspian, until the main Convoy arrived, when we "joined issue."

Travelling by way of Kermanshah and Hamadan, the main portion of the Convoy reached Kasvin on 6th December, 1918. The journey was a very interesting one, some of the finest Persian scenery being passed on the way. The weather was cold, but, upon the whole, pleasant; and though snow occasionally threatened, there was no fall except on the summits of the mountains, which were in some places ten to fourteen thousand feet high. The Asadabad Pass, about 9,000 feet high, was negotiated with much less difficulty than we had anticipated. One day was spent at Hamadan.

**NORTH
PERSIAN
FORCE—
KASVIN.**

The day after our arrival at Kasvin, we had both rain and snow, and we soon realised that we were to have a winter very much different from those we had spent in Meso. There were, however, several

KASVIN.

compensations. We were now housed in good, substantial stone billets, pay days were more profitable, and rum issues were more frequent. What millionaires we felt when we "raked" in hundreds of krans on pay days ; but with regard to their purchasing power—well, did not Dr. Jordan say that the Persian was an artist ? And were there not many carpets to be sold—and bought ?

The mails were much more irregular, but then, think of the glory of seventeen bags all in the orderly room at one time. We had a glorious time on Christmas day—sports, dinner, and concert—and the only thing lacking was the family circle. On Sundays, the little American Mission Room (afterwards the Church Army Room) was very popular with many of our men, and some pleasant little services were held there.

During December the remainder of the Kermanshah detachment joined headquarters, and also the bulk of those left behind at Khanikin. The Convoy was chiefly engaged in the evacuation of British sick from Hamadan to Kasvin and from the latter place to Enzeli. Indians were evacuated in the opposite direction. It was very rough work, particularly over the Aveh Pass, as there were several very heavy falls of snow, and many times the departures of convoys had to be cancelled owing to the roads being impassable. The temperature was often down to 15 or 20 degrees of frost.

On the 28th December, our first "demob" took place. Although the draft consisted of only one man, it was a great day, as hope now sprang "eternal in the human breasts" of the remainder of the unit. During the following three months, small drafts left us at varying intervals, for that Mecca of all Britishers—"Blighty." How the members of those drafts were envied by their less fortunate brothers !

The G.O.C. Northern Persian Force, on his tour of inspection, complimented the unit on its admirable little camp, and we were all, naturally, delighted to have made a good impression.

Our education was not entirely neglected during this time. We had some very interesting and instructive lectures, and a course of "physical jerks" was introduced. The performances of our splendid concert party, wonderful football team, and expert draughts players will be well remembered. A "Norperforce Education Committee" was formed and the "Thirty-third" had a good share of the work in connection with this organisation. The classes in French and Russian were attended by many of our men. A fortnightly magazine, "The Norperforce Gazette," first published on 18th February, 1919, was well supported by the Convoy, and one of our gallant corporals was an assistant editor.

On 1st March, largely through the energetic efforts of Capt. Forbes-Leith, the Officers' Club was **KASVIN**. opened in the old Russian Club, and soon became a very popular institution.

Another interesting episode in March was the sale of our "dud" cars; and we unanimously agreed that a Persian auction sale was indeed a most amusing event.

On 6th April, the D.M.S. approved our suggested reduced establishment, and consequently there **THE END.** was great joy in camp. The news meant that about thirty of us could be demobilized, and the remainder who were not yet eligible, or could not be spared, would be attached to 818 M.T. Company under the command of Capt. Forbes-Leith, A.S.C., and under the medical charge of Capt. K. D. Atteridge, R.A.M.C. The unit, as the "33rd M.A.C.", ceased to exist as from 10th April, 1919, and on the 11th a farewell dinner and concert was held, that was a night! On the following day, the O.C. and the aforesaid party left Kasvin for England, *via* Baku and the Caucasus.

It is not easy always to be philosophic, and it was a wrench to separate and to leave some of our members behind in Kasvin, but as the fates decreed, so it had to be.

The 33rd M.A.C. had come to an end—its work was done, and well done—so well, that its reputation and its memory will persist not only in the minor history of the war and in the minds of those who knew us and of those whom we helped, but as the most vivid and real factor in the lives of all of us who were privileged to belong to it, and to share in its work.

REMINISCENCES OF MESO'.

Would yer like to 'ear a bit abart a real salubrious spot.
Where the flies is big as sparrers, and the 'ens lay eggs white 'ot,
An' the luvly, creepy crawly things what bite yer day and night,
Make yer sure yer backed a loser when yer bought a skin so white ;
Where a gallon in a tankard ain't no more nor arf a pint,
An' the langwidge spoke arahnd yer is enough ter cook a j'int,
Where the women carry burdens, an wif veils their faces 'ide,
Where the men in Josef's clothin' mostly wear their shirts ahtside ?

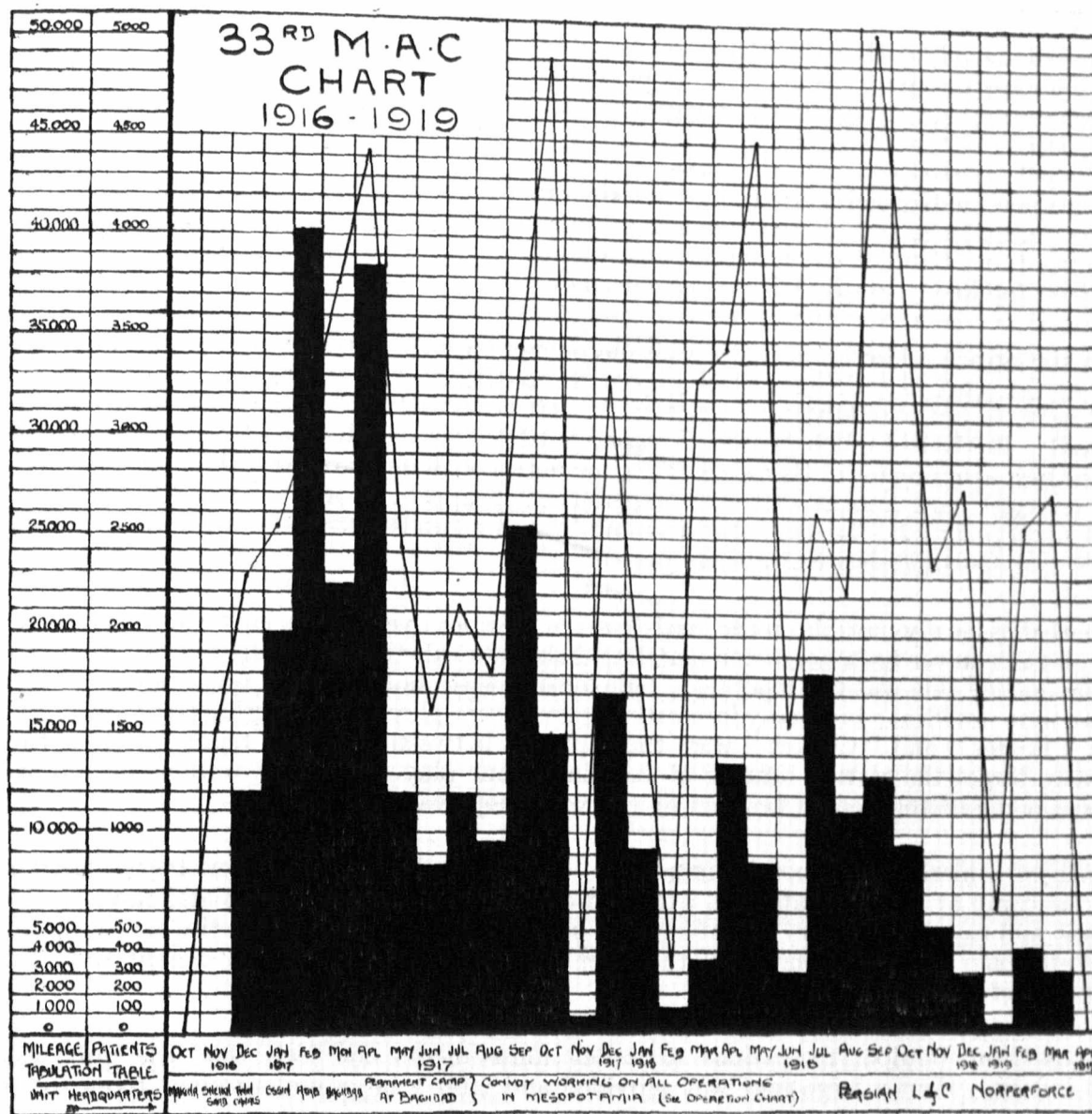
That's Meso'—just Meso'

Wif yer boots a-sinkin' deep in fine and dusty sodgy sand,
An' the camels, mules an' transport raisin clouds on ev'ry 'and,
When yer trottin' rahnd the desert an' yer tongue's a-lolling aht,
An' yer feel as if yer thirsty, an' could drain a water cart ;
When yer skin's a-oozing moistcher like a leaky garden 'ose,
An' the drops plop off yer elbers, an' yer chin, an' off yer nose ;
If a feller in a gharrie sharts yer—" Would yer like an ice ? "
Do yer blame us frowzy fuzzers when we say " It ain't so nice,"

In Meso'—In Meso'.

There are times yer 'oard yer water when ye're miles from any creek,
In a thimbleful yer wash an' shave as oft as twice a week,
An' tho' grumbles, ay an' curses, froth arahnd from morn till night,
Yet yer keep on some'ow keeping on, an' just a-sitting tight.
Till one day yer see the 'ouses, and the Minarets an' domes
Of the place where Ali Baba an' 'is pals once 'ad their 'omes,
An' ye're dumped alongside Tigris, wif the orange, date an' lime,
An' wif these, an' wif the City, why, yer don't have arf a time,

In Meso'—In Meso'.



The following figures were compiled from daily records of the work performed.

CONVOY STATISTICS		
DATE	PATIENTS	MILEAGE
1916		
Jan		15,000
Feb	1200	25,000
1917		
Jan	2000	25,500
Feb	4011	30,100
Mar	3847	37,690
Apr	3422	44,245
May	1208	89,210
June	820	16,120
July	1102	21,211
Aug	220	10,120
Sept	2550	20,220
Oct	1924	48,012
Nov	60	9,124
Dec	1100	35,264
1918		
Jan	926	16,054
Feb	112	2300
Mar	586	31,020
Apr	1567	29,215
May	606	44,887
June	201	15,376
July	1809	26,012
Aug	1106	23,275
Sept	1286	64,750
Oct	986	70,812
Nov	512	22,832
Dec	287	27,690
1919		
Jan	39	6,066
Feb	412	26,807
Mar	200	27,500
Apr	-	-
Total	55,945	805,425

KEY TO CHART.

Black Squares represent number of patients carried

Graph Lines—mileage per month.

**THE LIGHTER
SIDE
OF LIFE.**

It must not be imagined that the life of the 33rd M.A.C. consisted solely in hard work of a military nature. Perhaps the most striking feature of the history of this unit during its service in the East was its interesting and varied social recreations. Indeed it would not be too much to say that one of the principal reasons for its success as a military unit was the feeling of good fellowship and *esprit de corps* which existed between all ranks. This was very largely fostered by the high standard attained in sports and social relaxations when the unit was not actually engaged in field operations, and it was during these periods that the social life was principally developed. There were Sports, Entertainment and Canteen committees, consisting of officers and men elected by the Unit and each of these fulfilled its duties with great efficiency.

Wherever the British soldier went he took his national game with him and in Mesopotamia and Persia the men of the 33rd M.A.C. were always keen on football. The football grounds in and around Baghdad were, to put it mildly, somewhat hard ; but nevertheless exciting and interesting matches were played. By dint of much practice a very good team was evolved and played regular matches against the best army teams in Baghdad. The memories of these matches still linger and if occasionally one received hard knocks and even experienced disapproval of the referee's decision, yet to look back upon them is a pleasure. The team never won a cup but its standard of play was high and a spirit of real sportmanship was always present.

Rugby football is hardly possible on the hard desert of Messpot., yet certain enthusiasts of the handling code did play one never-to-be-forgotten match and also towards the end of the unit's stay in Baghdad a very fine hockey side was got together. Side by side with football there was cricket. Naturally the pitches were not ideal ; but many interesting games were played, and perhaps the most enjoyable games in "Footer" and "Cricket" were those played between different teams within the unit. It is hard to forget the stately bearing of certain of our players as they walked to chance their fate against some of the demon bowlers of the workshop team.

One branch of athletics must not be forgotten—that is, bathing. The river Tigris, flowing as it did past the camp at Baghdad afforded excellent opportunities for swimmers and novices alike and enthusiastic and capable teachers volunteered to instruct the uninitiated into the mysteries of swimming. Water-polo was often played in the river and much enjoyment and benefit were obtained from this side of the athletic activities.

Turning now from outdoor recreations to indoor amusements one feels that the unit was very fortunate indeed. First a large tent was provided and later a large underground room for the use

of the men. In this were placed all kinds of indoor games and a serviceable library—whilst the canteen was always at hand to satisfy the other appetites. Chess and draught tournaments were held and debates took place, to say nothing of the impromptu debates which were of daily occurrence.

**THE LIGHTER
SIDE
OF LIFE.**

One branch of the unit's activity deserves a special article for itself. That is, the famous Concert Party, the "Chequers." Since leaving the army, the writer of these notes has been delighted to hear from many ex-Mesopotamians—who were in no way connected with the unit—of the fame of the "Chequers." It is no exaggeration to say that apart from being one of the earliest concert parties in that country, it was one of the very best and it maintained its standard to the last. It began in a very small way but with the enthusiasm of all to push it along, it soon developed into a "great show," and had the proud distinction of helping in the opening of the Central Theatre in Baghdad, producing the most successful show played there—"The Corporal of the Guard." With the unit's removal to Persia the activity of the "Chequers" did not cease; it delighted large numbers of people both British and native as long as the unit remained. No words can do justice to the work of the founders, producers and artists of the "Chequers," and all must feel a glow of pride to think that they had something to do with its success. There are those who cherish visions of a resurrection of the "Chequers" in more congenial surroundings at a future date. Nothing could be more welcome.

The writer was privileged to take part in two Christmas celebrations—1917 in Baghdad and 1918 in Kasvin, Persia. They were both glorious festivals. The spirit of revelry was given free license. Plenty of good cheer was provided and some of the happiest memories of the past centre round these two festive occasions.

This has been but a brief and altogether inadequate survey of the social activities of this unit of the M.E.F. and Norperforce. No mere words can convey to an outsider any conception of the happy life within the unit. It was a company of sportsmen from beginning to end; each in his own way tried to help on the life of the whole and in spite of the hardships and tragedies of the campaign everyone will look back upon his life in the 33rd M.A.C. with wistful longings that some of those pleasant experiences may be renewed. The spirit of comradeship which existed can never be entirely lost. May this spirit which was the life of the 33rd ever be present in all its old members and good luck follow them through life.

In concluding this attempt to outline the history of the social life of this unit, mention must be made of the great assistance given by the British Red Cross Society and the Y.M.C.A., and kindred organisations. They did much to provide the means whereby life was made enjoyable for all.

**"SOME"
TEMPERATURES.**

The following record of temperatures will, perhaps, give some idea of the trying climatic conditions under which the Convoy often worked. It is suggested that the reader might compare the records given below with the temperatures recorded in England on the corresponding dates

Date.	Place.		Maxm. (Shade.)	Minm. (Shade.)	Remarks.
Oct. 10, 1916	Makina	92	67	Unit landed.
Jan. 10, 1917	Sheik-Saad	60	40	About 100 degrees in the sun.
Apr. 26, 1917	Baghdad	107.7	63.9	
June 5, 1917	"	102	69	
July 20, 1917	"	122.8	81.6	" Official " " Record " for 1917.
July 20, 1917	"	125	—	In an E.P. tent.
Sept. 9, 1917	"	100.5	65.4	
Dec. 27, 1917	"	56.8	40.5	
July 2, 1918	"	117.8	87.8	" Record " for 1918.
Sept. 11, 1918	Ruz	117	—	In an E.P. tent.
Oct. 13, 1918	Khanikin	96	64	" "
Nov. 28, 1918	"	75	47	" "
Dec. 27, 1918	Kasvin	—	14	Outside.
Jan. 28, 1919	"	—	10	"
Jan. 19, 1919	"	—	—	} Roads snowed up ; several feet of snow.
Mar. 7, 1919	"	—	—	
& others					

Except as where stated, the temperatures are those of stone buildings. The convoy never had the "luxury" of billets until December, 1918.

**"THE PASSING
OF THE
THIRTY-THIRD"**

("The Passing of the Thirty-Third" is a supposed soliloquy of the old quartermaster-sergeant, who, having spent several years with the 33rd M.A.C. in England, Mesopotamia and Persia, is the last to leave the headquarters of the unit when the Convoy is finally demobilized.

It is hoped that the reader will consider "the Quarter's" pride in his Unit quite justifiable and pardonable.)

Ah, well ; the end has come at last ! They are all gone, and in a short time, I, too, shall follow in their wake.

I can scarcely realise it all yet. Can it really be true that "The Immortal Thirty-Third" has ceased to exist ? That only memories now remain of the unit which for almost three years has been the backbone and sinew of the ambulance work in Meso' or Persia.

The evacuation of the sick and wounded of the few scattered troops remaining as an Army of Occupation must be carried on by other hands and other instruments. But none will do it better than the old "Thirty-Third"—the "Diehards" of the medical and motor world. They came, they saw, they conquered. All other M.A.C.'s had to bow the knee before them. Whether on the dusty plains of Felujah, or the snow-clad hills of Northern Persia, the men and the vehicles won undying fame for their unit and their country. Baqubah and Sumarra, Shumran and Diala, Ramadie and Sharoban, Hit, Anah and Kirkuk, are only a few of the many spots whose names will linger in the hearts of those great lads of the "Thirty-third."

**"THE PASSING
OF THE
THIRTY-THIRD"**

The very cars seemed to be aware of the great work they were performing. The engines within them were not machines—they were *hearts* that throbbed in unison and concord with the hearts of their drivers. The journeys they performed, the miracles they wrought, the lives they saved, were wonderful feats that could only be performed by organisms controlled by mind and brain, and not by mechanisms propelled only by the power of petrol. The inventor of these marvellous vehicles—Henry Ford—in his wildest dreams, never imagined that the creatures of his inventive genius would perform the Herculean tasks executed by them since their first introduction to "the land of the Two Rivers." Ford, and his colleagues, invented them, produced them, boomed them, sold them—but they could not *inspire* them. It was beyond their puny powers to give them *souls*. Their souls were a gradual development; produced by a knowledge of the feats expected of them, and by that bond of sympathy and co-operation between car and driver that quickly became a factor with which all competitors had seriously to grapple.

How was it that long after, by all that was logical and rational, the vehicles should have been lying forgotten on some neglected scrap-heap of a M.T. Depot, they were still adding laurels to their fame, in those regions bordering on the Caspian Sea? Because although the shells and the floods, the furnace and the cyclone, could destroy their bodies, like Belgium, their souls could not be destroyed, but the brave little cars are gone! I can still hear the whirr of the last one speeding on its final run as a "Thirty-Third" chariot. May its spirit, and the spirits of them all, obtain a quiet and peaceful resting place in some secluded depot, or may they find master-spirits who will, for the sake of their great reputations and their deeds of valour, treat them with the tender consideration they have undoubtedly merited. Truly, if there be motor cars in heaven, I shall expect to meet there again my dear old friends of the "Thirty-Third," fitting conveyances for the winged denizens of the celestial regions!

**"THE PASSING
OF THE
THIRTY-THIRD"**

And what of the men ? Ay, what of the men ? Oh, they were great lads, those lads of the " Thirty-Third !" From the commanding Officer to the youngest private, they were worthy of the land that bore them. For " A man's a man for a' that," whether he be the proud owner of a three-starred tunic, or the wearer of a suit of dirty dungarees. They came from all parts of the " old country "—Dublin and Ipswich, Penzance and Aberdeen. They were English, Scotch, Irish and Welsh ; but when there was work to be done, or dangers to be faced, they were all of one nationality, they were all *British*. Of dialects there were many, and one often heard the broad accents of South Lancashier arguing with the superfluous Z's of Zomerset ; or a wee Scotch laddie fra Edinbro' Toon trying to convince his " brather Landaner " that the " Glasky Herrrrald " is a more powerful organ than the " Dily Mile."

Sometimes they groused about the " grub," sometimes they did not think that doing guard was exactly a picnic, sometimes at reveille the call of the blanket was more to them than "The Call of the East"; but, the more dangerous the task, the more difficult the work, the more trying the conditions, the more eager were the lads of " The Thirty-Third " to do their duty. It was this willing spirit in them which carried the cars through the mud of Meso' and the snow of the Asadabad ; which won for them at Shumran Bend the thanks of the Army Commander and for their O.C. the coveted riband of the D.S.O.

The story was the same wherever they went ; Kasvin was captured as easily as Khanikin, Persia succumbed to their charms in the same manner as her sister Meso' had done before her. Wherever one goes, there is always room at the top, and " The Thirty-Third " were never long in getting there. Ay, those lads will do well in any sphere. Britain should be proud of them, for they have served her well. Whatever their reward, it can never be too great for them. And now they are all gone—gone to resume their former occupations. May they find unalloyed happiness at home. and may their wives and children, fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters, sweethearts and friends, appreciate them, admire them, love and cherish them as they only too well deserve.

* * * * *

What ! Can that really be *my* face that I can see there reflected in the mirror on the wall ? Has my hair really turned *so* grey, and my face become *so* wrinkled since I came out with " The Thirty-Third ?" Yes, I suppose it is impossible to escape from the fact that " I am an old man now." I always pictured myself as an old, old man, with hoary head and tottering gait, at the end of the

Great World War, still "carrying on" in the Orderly Room my usual duties as well as an enfeebled mind would allow, having seen the rest pass away before me,—some to that Land which knows no war, some to their homes as war-worn invalids, some to duties in other companies, and the remainder marching under that "banner with a strange device"—**DEMobilized.** **"THE PASSING OF THE THIRTY-THIRD"**

But even now as I sit, half dozing, in the old orderly room, those gallant lads seem still to be near me. I still fancy I can hear their cheery voices, as they crack jokes with one another, or sing their lively songs as on a rum-issue night. The air is electrified with their high spirits, and the cobble stones even yet fairly echo the tread of the men who carried out the last loads.

No; they cannot be gone! They are still here; I feel it in every nerve and fibre of my body! I know it—why, I can see and hear them! There they are; I knew I could not be wrong! What fine lads they look, too! And all coming in *my* direction. Why it must be a "Pay Day." Come along, boys; Hurrah for "The Old Thirty-Third!"

Party, 'shun! Good morning, Sir! Ay, that's the O.C. sure enough. God bless him! God bless them all!

Additional copies of this book may be obtained from R. Williamson, Kasvin, Llandrindod Wells.

Private Addresses of Personnel of 33rd Motor Ambulance Convoy.

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Yates, J.

HOTCH-POTCH.

On Dit—

The rupee is now valued at 2s. It used to feel like sixpence.

Slippery bunds are not the safest places to walk along, after one has been "bottled up" all the evening.

The Cavalry did some great stunts, when the 33rd were backing them up.

It was Es Sinn to dig great pits on Sundays.

'Twas only at Sheikh Saad the great "for duration" hole was commenced, having a short (but swift) rain (beg pardon—reign.)

It made a fine swimming bath.

A Ford is not a Ford when it's a-fire.

Lectures and Slides are in great demand. Book for next winter now.

His socks *were* all right.

Fords look sad en ghari persien.

We would like to know—

What is a logical and coherent statement?

Where the corpses of the marauding Arabs were next morning, after the Guards' "mad minute." (Ask Andrew).

Who drew the fire insurance money for the well-lighted car at Twin Canals.

Who was the author of the sanitary trade mark, "Let us Spray?"

AUTOGRAPHS :

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